THE

HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN;

ITS

ARTS, AND ITS SCIENCES,

AS CONNECTED WITH

THE HISTORY OF THE OTHER GREAT EMPIRES OF ASIA,

DURING THE MOST ANCIENT PERIODS OF THE WORLD.

WITH

NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIVE ENGRAVINGS.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF INDIAN ANTIQUITIES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED, BY H. L. GALABIN,
FOR THE AUTHOR;
AND SOLD BY T. GARDINER, NO. 19, PRINCE'S STREET,
CAVENDISH-SQUARE.
M.DCC.XCVIII.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PITT,

FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, &c. &c. &c.

THIS

VOLUME,

AN HUMBLE TRIBUTE OF GENUINE RESPECT,

IS

GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS

OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THOMAS MAURICE.

PREFACE.

Faithful, throughout, to the hypothesis on which, under the sanction of the highest Oriental authority possible, it originally commenced, the History of Ancient India and of the Avatars has at length proceeded to its conclusion. Sir William Jones afforded the clue which has directed my path through this dark and intricate labyrinth. I have cautiously adhered to the outline which his pencil drew, and have in no instance deviated from my honoured guide. I am aware that there are Indian scholars of great respect and ability who widely differ in opinion from him on some of the topics discussed in this and the former volumes; but, till these gentlemen oblige us with (what, however, will not easily be found) a *better hypothesis*, one more consistent with the general history of the ancient world, as detailed in profane records, one more reconcileable to the common sense and reason of mankind, and one more consonant to the national code of faith, I hope they will excuse me for persevering in it. It would have been a great honour to me to have been favoured with their approbation and support; it would also have been materially to my interest, as I should then, probably, have had the benefit of their advice in other respects. Deprived of

that advantage, and writing also under the pressure of other nameless difficulties, I have, I trust, a claim proportionably strong on the candour of the public in their perusal of this volume. Under those difficulties, this work, when nearly half completed, must have inevitably sunk, had it not been for the generous kindness of two friends of great worth and erudition, and the support which their efforts met with from the greater part of the episcopal order, and other persons of rank, who saw the importance of an undertaking of this kind, especially at the present CRISIS, to the best interests of society. To two other highly distinguished Characters, and to a great Commercial Company, I am also particularly bound thus publicly to return my humble and grateful acknowledgements.

In the preface to the former volume, I cursorily mentioned Mr. Volney's impious attempt to mythologize away the whole of the Christian system, by insisting that the history and miracles of Christ were borrowed from those of the Indian Creeshna. According to that hypothesis, the holy Offspring of the Virgin means only the solar orb rising in the sign Virgo, the *twelve* Apostles are the *twelve* zodiacal asterisms, while the very name Jesus is as impiously traced to YES, *the ancient cabalistical name of young Bacchus.* Thus is the truth of history insulted, and the corroborating testimony of ages set aside, for the laudable purpose of plunging Christian Europe into all the horrors of atheistical France. Those who duly consider how intimately the

established governments and the legal codes of Europe, and especially the jurisdiction of these kingdoms, are connected with the Christian code, will not be at a loss to see the drift and purport of arguments of this kind. In truth, they are as inseparably connected as the soul is with the body, and they must *stand* or *fall* together. The reader, therefore, will not be offended if he find the Avatar of Creeshna, which has in great part given birth to these blasphemies, engross nearly a third part of the present volume, since it was a subject of too deep importance to Britons, both individually and nationally, to be slightly or rapidly passed over. In the two introductory chapters to that Life, I have endeavoured fully to investigate the matter, and to trace the error to its true source; to prove whence originally sprang the idea of an AVATAR, or *descent of Deity* in a human form, and by what means it has happened that many of the events in the life of Christ and Creeshna so nearly resemble each other. It became the more necessary to enter at length into this momentous question, because, since that volume was published, Mr. Dupuis' long-threatened work, the baleful fountain from which Mr. Volney's was only a rivulet, has made its appearance; a work composed with the declared intention of subverting Christianity and re-erecting paganism on its ruins. Thus assailed by apostatizing Christians on the one hand, and by paganizing Jews on the other; for, the Jews themselves, if we may judge by some very recent produc-

tions of the learned of their nation, seem determined to aid the foe, at this critical juncture, by attacks peculiarly daring and inveterate, (a conduct by no means either *grateful*, *decent*, or *prudent*;) it becomes the indispensable duty of every member of the Christian community, as he values the civil and religious rites or the independance of his country, to stand decidedly forward in its support. I have endeavoured to do *my* duty on this momentous occasion, and, whatever may be the sentiments and conduct of my cotemporaries, when the storms that at present hang over Europe shall have been dispersed, and peace and order be restored, *posterity will thank me.*

With respect to that wonderful composition, the Life of Creeshna itself, the reader will be pleased to peruse it with that degree of candour to which a work, not originally intended for publication, is entitled. It is a faithful, though rapid, translation by Mr. Halhed from a Persian manuscript, now deposited, together with the translation itself, in the British Museum; it was done for his own private gratification before that gentleman's final, and ever to be lamented, desertion of the Indian Muses. I have not presumed to alter it farther than to blot out some parts which, however agreeable to a high-seasoned Oriental palate, appeared to me to glow with colours and images not sufficiently chaste for an European eye. I should have crased more, but it was necessary that the reader should judge for himself concerning this motley character, which

has been so impiously paralleled with that of the Christian Messiah. In fact, any more extended erasure would have materially altered the portrait. The reader must see Creeshna as he *is*, to judge of him properly; he must contemplate him with all the puerility and licentiousness, as well as with all the virtue and dignity, attached to his Avatar. I never intended to do the work of the adversary, by making Creeshna a *perfect model of an incarnate Deity*. It has cost me immense labour to prepare it in this manner, for the public eye, from a voluminous manuscript which, though the production of an able pen, was by no means sufficiently correct for that eye: many parts still remain obscure, and many Sanscreet words are still unexplained; yet, imperfect as it is, the public will doubtless think themselves obliged to me for the production of it, and know how to set a proper value upon so curious and estimable a relic of ancient Indian literature, especially when considered in its connection with other points of unspeakable interest and importance to society.

It was my anxious wish to have brought down the Ancient History of India to the period at which it properly terminates, that of the first invasion of Hindostan by the Arabian generals in the seventh century; but the great length of the Eighth Avatar has prevented my descending farther down in the annals of time than the irruption of Alexander. For the history of the intervening period there are few materials of a Sanscreet kind yet known to

Europeans; the Brahmins seem to have been more zealous to preserve the history of their wretched superstitions than that of the succession of their kings, while the Greek and Roman writers afford but a scanty glimmering of information on that head. It forms, however, a very interesting portion in Asiatic annals, comprehending the history of the Ptolemys in Egypt, of the Seleucidæ, and their descendants in Syria, and of the ancient Parthians; and is intimately connected with that of Greece and Rome. If there remain in India, which there is great reason to doubt, any regular authentic history of the dynasties that flourished during those centuries, they will probably in time be explored and detailed by the persevering industry of the members of the Asiatic Society. My business has been to arrange and combine what has already been explored and presented to the public in detached fragments, and that office I have endeavoured faithfully to execute under the guidance of a pilot, whose decease is the most fatal of all obstacles that could have happened to the completion of a history of India on a more comprehensive scale. To him was equally known the astronomical mythology of Greece and of Hindostan, and he also was able nicely to discriminate in their respective systems between what was history and what was fable. But I need not descant farther on the merits of Sir William Jones; they have been too often and too impressively displayed to need enumeration here. Suffice it to say, while I finally bid adieu to

the melancholy subject, that in him Oriental science lost an invaluable patron, the Christian religion an able defender, the Hindoos an upright and dispassionate judge, and human nature itself one of its brightest ornaments.

So extended an interval has elapsed since the subscription to the Indian History first commenced, and I am so little able, from want of correct memoranda, to distinguish between the subscribers to the Indian Antiquities and the present work, that, to avoid giving offence by improper *insertion* or by *omission*, it has been thought most prudent to omit the list of names altogether. The catalogue, though not numerous, would, from the conspicuous rank and talents of its patrons be truly honourable to me; but I am convinced that the completion of their generous views, in subscribing to this undertaking, will prove to them a far more ample gratification than the ostentatious production of names, however celebrated, and of titles, however exalted.

No. 19, *Prince's Street, Cavendish-Square,*
October 1, 1798.

ADVERTISEMENT.

For an explanation of the LUNAR ASTRONOMY *of the Brahmins, and the translation of the Sanscreet names of the several* MANSIONS *exhibited on the* LUNAR ZODIAC, *the reader will be pleased to consult page* 284 *of the former volume, and the pages immediately preceding and subsequent to it. The other plates of this volume are sufficiently explained under the Avatars which they were respectively intended to illustrate. They are* fac similes *of the mythological designs of a people, who, it will be candidly considered, are utter strangers to* PERSPECTIVE. *Absurd as some of them may appear to an European eye, it appeared still more absurd to attempt to make any alterations in them.*

THE

HISTORY

OF

HINDOSTAN,

SANSCREET AND CLASSICAL.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

PART THE FIRST.

HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.

BOOK II.

CONTINUING THE HISTORY OF THE SEVEN REMAINING INDIAN AVATARS, AND DETAILING THE EVENTS OF THE EARLIEST POST-DILUVIAN AGES.

GENERAL PROSPECTUS.

A connected Display of all the Indian Avatars, exhibited from a Sanscreet Author. — The Fourth Incarnation of Veeshnu in the Form of NARA-SING, *or the* MAN-LION, *to destroy a blaspheming Monarch. — The Fifth Incarnation of Veeshnu in the Form of* BAHMUN, *the* DWARF. — *The Sixth Incarnation of Veeshnu in the Form of* PARASU-RAMA. — *The Seventh Incarnation of Veeshnu in the Form of* RAMA-CHANDRA. — *The Eighth Incarnation of Veeshnu in the Form of* CREESHNA, *with an extensive Life of that favourite Deity of the Indians, from the* PURANAS. — *The Ninth Incarnation of Veeshnu in the Form of* BUDDHA. — *The Tenth, or future, Incarnation of Veeshnu in the Form of* CALCI; *that is, of an armed Warrior, brandishing a blazing Cimeter, and riding on a white Horse, like the crowned Hero in the Apocalypse, to dissolve the Universe.*

CHAPTER I.

The Fourth Incarnation of Veeshnu in the Form of NARA-SING, *or the* MAN-LION, *bursting from a marble Pillar to destroy a blaspheming Monarch, supposed to allude to the Catastrophe at* BABEL.

I Cannot commence this second volume of the History of Ancient India more properly than by presenting the reader with the following historical display, in Sanscreet poetry, of the ten Avatars, or divine descents, in which he will have a connected view of the whole, and of the principal events meant to be recorded in each of those ingenious allegories.

ODE OF JAYADEVA, THE SUBLIME LYRIC POET OF INDIA, IN HONOUR OF VEESHNU, IN HIS TEN GRAND INCARNATIONS.

1. Thou recoverest the Veda in the water of the ocean of destruction, placing it joyfully in the bosom of an ark fabricated by thee, O CESAVA, assuming the body of a fish: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!

2. The earth, placed on the point of thy tusk, remains fixed like the figure of a black antelope on the moon, O CESAVA, assuming the form of a boar: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!

3. The earth stands firm on thy immensely broad back, which grows larger from the callus occasioned by bearing that vast burthen, O CESAVA, assuming the body of a tortoise: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!

4. The claw with a stupendous point, on the exquisite lotos of thy lion's paw, is the black bee that stung the body of the embow-

elled HIRANYACASIPU, O CESAVA, assuming the form of a man-lion: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!

5. By thy power thou beguilest BALI, O thou miraculous dwarf, thou purifier of men with the water (of Ganga) springing from thy feet, O CESAVA, assuming the form of a dwarf: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!

6. Thou bathest in pure water, consisting of the blood of Cshatriya's, the world, whose offences are removed, and who are relieved from the pain of other births, O CESAVA, assuming the form of PARASU-RAMA: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!

7. With ease to thyself, with delight to the genii of the eight regions, thou scatterest on all sides in the plain of combat the demon with ten heads, O CESAVA, assuming the form of RAMA-CHANDRA: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!

8. Thou wearest on thy bright body a mantle shining like a blue cloud, or like the water of Yamana tripping towards thee through fear of thy furrowing ploughshare, O CESAVA, assuming the form of CREESHNA: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!

9. Thou blamest (oh! wonderful power!) the whole Veda, when thou seest, O kind-hearted! the slaughter of cattle prescribed for sacrifice, O CESAVA, assuming the body of BUDDHA: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!

10. For the destruction of all the impure, thou drawest thy cimeter blazing like a comet, (how tremendous!) O CESAVA, assuming the body of CALCI: Be victorious, O HERI, Lord of the Universe!*

Previously to our entering on the history of the seven remaining Avatars, it is necessary we should attend to the sacred bark safely piloted, amidst the raging waters, by the guiding horn of the stupen-

* Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 120.

dous fish SAPHARI, or the deity incarnate in the Matsya, as detailed in a page* of the former volume, to which, for the sake of connection, the reader is requested to advert. It is of importance that the place of its landing should be discussed, because even some learned and pious Christian writers, contrary to the apparent sense of Scripture, have fixed its appulse to earth, not in the mountains of Mesopotamia, but on the heights of the Indian Caucasus. I shall endeavour, impartially, to state the leading arguments on either side of the question.

The vessel in which the virtuous Indian monarch, SATYAURATA, was preserved, having floated for *a day of Brahma* upon the surface of the watery abyss, or, in other words, to leave the language of fable for that of truth and Scripture, the ark of NOAH having continued upon the bosom of the watery element during a complete year, and the flood having universally subsided, we are informed by the Hebrew Scriptures that it rested upon the mountains of Ararat. By Ararat is generally understood Armenia, and the word is thus translated in the Septuagint and in the Vulgate; but Sir Walter Raleigh† contends, and his opinion has been, in part, adopted by Bishop Patrick,‡ one of the best commentators on the Old Testament, that, by Ararat, the sacred historian meant that long ridge of mountains extending through Asia, from Armenia, on the west, to the confines of India, on the east, to which the ancients gave the general name of Taurus and Caucasus. It will indeed be observed by the reader that the sacred text does not say that the ark rested upon Mount Ararat; but uses the word in the plural number, which, in the opinion of those writers, only implies that it rested upon ONE of the mountains of that vast chain which was distinguished by different appellations in the various countries through which it passed, and

* See vol. i. p. 555.

† See Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World, p. 68. edit. London, 1677.

‡ Consult Bishop Patrick, on Gen. cap. viii. verse iv.

which, near its western rise, was known to the inhabitants of ancient Syria by that of Ararat. One of the highest authorities in the Christian church, cited by the Bishop, gives a direct sanction to this assertion, that by the mountains of Ararat, whereon the ark rested, are to be understood, not those of Armenia in particular, but the lofty summits of Taurus itself, which, from their great elevation, widely overlook the plains of Ararat. The conjecture, I own, will appear less strained when it is considered how customary it has been for high and extensive ridges of mountains, by whatever name in particular regions demonstrated, to be distinguished by one general appellation. Thus, in Africa, the immense chain of mountains, extending from the great western ocean as far as Egypt, is called ATLAS; and thus, in South America, the still more stupendous chain, running from north to south for above four thousand miles together along the coast of the Pacific Ocean, is called the ANDES.

With equal ingenuity and zeal has the great man and able historian above referred to laboured to support this novel hypothesis, which originated with Goropius Becanus,* a fanciful writer at best, that the ark of Noah rested upon some eminence of that mighty chain, in a far more eastern latitude than is generally supposed, and even on the confines of India. The opinion, thus taken up by Raleigh, has since been warmly adopted by some very able scholars; and, were not both the general sense of Scripture and the opinion of the best geographers decidedly against it, would appear to be irrefragably confirmed by what late discoveries have taught mankind of the rapid advancement of science, and the very early maturity of the arts, as well as of the general civilization and astonishing population, during the remotest periods recorded in history, of the inhabitants of the distant and secluded regions of India and China. Since this subject, which discusses the place of the original settlement of the great patriarch, is by no means one of the least important in the circle of Asiatic antiquities; and since any

* See Goropius Becanus, Indo-Scythia, p. 473.

new light thrown upon it may prove of considerable service in the survey which we are now taking of the first ages of the Indian history; I shall proceed impartially to lay before the reader the principal arguments, which both Raleigh and other respectable writers, since his time, have advanced to establish the position in question.

One of the most plausible arguments in favour of the conjecture is derived from the express declaration of Scripture, that the progeny of Noah journeyed *from the east* towards the plain of Shinaar. Now, had they descended from any mountain in Armenia into the plains of Babylon, they must have travelled from the north, or rather from the north-west; for, such is the situation of the Armenian hills, in respect to these plains; but the mountains of Caucasus, or Paropamisus, lie directly east from Babylon; and in this direction alone could they have been represented as journeying *from the east.* Another argument, urged in support of this position, arises from the absolute and total silence of the Hebrew historian, in the succeeding pages of his history, concerning the future fate and local residence of so important a personage as Noah.

At the advanced period of life which Noah had reached, for he was six hundred years old, when the flood took place; it is rather improbable, say the objectors, that *he* should wander far from the spot where the ark rested. It is more reasonable to suppose, that, whatever spirit of curiosity or zeal for migration might animate his posterity, he himself remained in the region which had been in a manner consecrated by the new covenant, which the Almighty had there entered into with man, and by the act of offering up his oblation to the Deity. He might esteem it as the sacred spot assigned him for his future residence by the same Guardian-Providence, which guided thither the ark in which he had been so miraculously saved. Had Noah himself, however, journeyed with his family to Shinaar, or settled in Armenia, Mesopotamia, or in any of the adjacent countries, it has been thought in the highest degree improbable, that the venerable patriarch, who had so large a share in the transactions of

the ancient world, and so undoubted an interest in the concerns of the new one, that the conspicuous instrument, in the hands of Providence, of preserving the remains of the human race and all the inferior orders of created beings, should be totally neglected or forgotten by Moses, except in the single circumstance of the period in which his death happened. From this silence, a third argument is also deduced, that Noah, with some part of his family, who came out of the ark, was settled at too great a distance to mingle in the transactions, and be noticed in the annals, however concise, of those nations who settled about Shinaar, and to whose transactions alone, from the dispersion of mankind, Moses professedly devotes his narrative.

A fourth, and not the least forcible, argument is drawn from the utter incredibility that he, who had been appointed the august but neglected prophet to announce the impending vengeance of God against the pride and impiety of the antediluvian race, and before whose eyes the fatal prophecy had been so recently consummated in the tremendous event of a destroying deluge, would have permitted so immediate and daring a repetition of those crimes as his degenerate posterity exhibited in the erection of the Tower of Babel, or would not have restrained the madness of the attempt by the most vigorous efforts, such as his power, in the capacity of a supreme monarch, and his authority, as the sole father of the renovated race of man, must have enabled him to make. A fifth argument is drawn from the remarkable expression, adopted by Moses, to describe this migration from Ararat; viz. that they *journeyed* towards the plains of Shinaar; an expression, which, Dr. Shuckford observes, evidently denotes both distance of situation and length of time for the performance of that migration. That writer has gone more in detail into the subject than the last-named historian, and has ventured to offer a few additional particulars which are deserving notice. He is of opinion, that seventy years might elapse before one part of the family of Noah separated itself from the other, and he thinks that period sufficient

for such an increased population of mankind, according to the great injunction to *increase and multiply and replenish the earth*, as might render a separation necessary. In regard to the distance of situation, he states the space, between the plains of Shinaar and that part of Caucasus where he contends the ark rested, to be about 1200 miles; and, in respect to the length of time in performing the journey, considering the state of the earth so soon after the deluge, the extensive marshes and wide stagnant lakes, which that deluge must have left, as yet undrained by the labour of man; the impervious woods and thick shrubs which the rank luxuriant soil, in the course of seventy or eighty years would naturally produce; together with the trackless mountains and wild wastes which they had to traverse; from these circumstances he deems it reasonable to allow ten or twelve years for its completion. He thinks they set out with no determined view to settle in Shinaar, but pitched their tents as Abraham did in after-ages, and took up their occasional residence in spots remarkable for their beauty, or convenient in point of accommodation, till at length they reached those luxuriant and happy plains, where they finally settled.

The argument, however, which is insisted on as of the greatest weight in the discussion of this point arises from the surprising population and early maturity in arts and sciences, for which ancient authors have asserted, and modern writers have demonstrated, the Indians above most other nations were distinguished. The two authors above referred to particularly dwell on the circumstance of those immense armies, which the Indian monarchs, in so few ages after the flood, were able to bring into the field, to oppose the forces of Semiramis; but, as the event itself of that invasion, as given by Diodorus Siculus from the Ctesias, is by no means the most authenticated portion of ancient history, and since those respectable authors, who admit its possibility, hesitate at believing the numbers assigned by them to the contending armies, I shall not follow their example in dwelling at great length on so disputable a point, especially as

the subject will come before us in an historical point of view hereafter.

Far more convincing evidence of the Indians having been one of the most early civilized, as well as most populous, nations of the globe, at the remotest date to which human annals ascend, is to be found in two very modern authors, Sir William Jones and Mr. Halhed; the former not at all inclined to favour their romantic claims to antiquity, and the latter a writer too deeply acquainted with the subject of which he treats, to allow the possibility of his being imposed upon or materially mistaken, and of too high a character in the literary and moral world intentionally to impose upon others. Sir William Jones, in the Asiatic Researches, records their most early and intimate acquaintance with metaphysics, ethics, and other abstruse sciences; in which, to arrive at any degree of perfection, there must necessarily be supposed to have been a long course of previous investigation, a progressive improvement in philosophical attainments, and a gradual expansion of the powers of the soul; and *that*, in periods when the rest of Asia was immersed in extreme barbarity and ignorance. On these intricate subjects they possess an infinite variety of treatises, of an age far superior to any known writings of the kind in the world; and in those treatises may be found all the profound speculations of the Grecian philosophers; all the refined logical disquisitions of the Peripatetic, and all the sublime morality of the Stoical, school. The truth of the above assertion is exemplified in no one instance more strongly than in the enlarged principles of legislation, upon which their government was founded, and in the profound wisdom exhibited in the admirable and voluminous code of their laws, forming together a grand system of policy, which provides against every probable exigence of civil government, and most possible infringements upon the peace of society by daring and unprincipled individuals; a system that could only have been brought to maturity, after a revolution of many centuries, in which the numerous instances of public and private injury alluded to and redressed,

and the points of litigation and controversy particularized and decided, must have occurred; but, withal, a system established in æras of such unfathomable antiquity, that, in their ignorance of the real author, it has been attributed to Brahma, a visionary being, or to Menu, who, if he be not Noah, is a being equally imaginary. On this system of jurisprudence, by which I would be understood principally to mean the original code of Brahmin laws contained in the MENUSMRITI, or Institutes remembered from Menu, a thousand commentaries have been written; some of them, (say the Hindoos in their romantic style,) many millions of years ago; and from these commentaries the code of Gentoo laws, translated by Mr. Halhed, was extracted. To such minute particulars has the wise legislator of India descended, that, in the ancient work above alluded to, (the Institutes,) there is a curious passage on the legal interest of money, and the limited rate of it in different cases, with an exception in regard to adventures at sea; and this apparently compiled in periods when it was thought in Europe that no extensive commercial intercourse existed among mankind, and few adventures by sea were undertaken. Still more wonderful is their early improvement in mathematical and astronomical knowledge; for, according to Mr. Bailli, their instruments, though stupendous and of high antiquity, are made with such exactness, that they evince, in the fabricators, an intimate acquaintance with the elements of geometry, spherical trigonometry,* and other sciences, not then supposed to have been cultivated. Those instruments and their tables of calculation remain a superb and lasting monument of their early maturity in astronomical researches; although the exact principles upon which the former were constructed and the latter composed are no longer understood by the Brahmins.

To these various arguments, however, powerful and imposing as they are in favour of the ark having rested upon the summits of the

* See Mr. Playfair's remarks on the astronomy of the Brahmins in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, vol. ii. part ii. p. 175.

Indian Caucasus, not only the sacred books, understood in their natural and obvious sense, but the civil history of mankind, in the earliest ages after the flood, so far as the fragments of that history in Berosus, Sanchoniatho, and a few other of the most early annalists of Asiatic events, have descended down to us, give the direct negative. But, what is still more to the purpose, the ancient records of the Hindoos themselves, recently explored, affirm their establishment in Persia, which lies in the direct line eastward from the region, in which, according to Scripture, the ark settled, previously to the formation of any regular government in India: and those venerable writings farther corroborate this statement by asserting, that the ancestors of the Chinese were originally a colony of Hindoos; who, about fifteen centuries before Christ, emigrated from their native country, and, passing the Ganges, erected a new empire in the province of Shenshi, afterwards increased and finally subdued by still more numerous and powerful colonies from the over-charged plains of Scythia. In respect to the surprizing progress of the Indians in arts and sciences, if allowed in the extent required, (and I am willing to allow it the utmost possible extent compatible with the Mosaic chronology, and not hostile to Christianity,) it may be fairly and reasonably accounted for on the hypothesis, which, under the influence, I trust, of the best motives, throughout this work, I have laboured to establish, viz. that of a strong mixture of ante-diluvian science, preserved in the breast and in the family of Noah, with that flourishing in the early post-diluvian ages.

Armenia lies to the north of Mesopotamia, and its very name, compounded according to Bochart of AR and MENE, *mons lunaris*, or the *mountain of the moon*, is a remarkable proof how early those who descended from the ark began to engage in astronomical speculations, and apply to conspicuous objects in nature the names of the planets. Its more general denomination was ARARAT, which signifies *the mountain of descent*, for, *in cacumine illius montis, arca Noa post diluvium primum stetit*, upon the summit of that mountain,

the ark of Noah rested after the deluge.* The particular eminence upon which the ark descended was denominated BARIS. Mr. Bryant has justly remarked, that the wisdom of Providence was singularly displayed in directing the vessel to a region particularly well calculated to be the nursing-parent of the human race; a region in the highest degree fertile, full of rich plains and valleys, abounding with every production necessary for life, watered with noble rivers, particularly the Araxes, and, as we learn from Strabo, anciently celebrated for producing that olive, which those, who would willingly find inconsistency in the Mosaic history, have denied Armenia the distinction of bearing. A country, thus composed of mountains and extensive valleys, would, in all probability, be earliest dried, and consequently soonest habitable. In this region, then, according both to Scripture and probability, the eight holy persons, afterwards venerated in the pagan world as the eight principal gods, the sacred OGDOAS† of the Egyptians, the great Satyaurata and the seven pious REYSHEES of India, descended; there they planted the first colony after the flood, and founded the first city, called THAMANIM, from the number EIGHT.

Anxious to give the two opinions impartially, I shall not conceal a circumstance that makes considerably for the system of Raleigh and his followers, and Mr. Bryant is the authority for it.‡ One part of Mount Taurus, situated in Aderbijian, in Persia, is still called AL BARIS, similar to the name by which Ararat was anciently distinguished. Sir Thomas Herbert, an inquisitive traveller and faithful writer, to whose Indian travels I shall hereafter be greatly indebted, visited this spot in 1626, and tells us, that the inhabitants have an

* See Bocharti Geograph. Sacra. p. 22, edit. 1674; and Bryant's Analysis, vol. iii. p. 3.

† The Ogdoas, says Mr. Bryant, consisted of eight personages described in a boat, who were esteemed the most ancient gods of the country. In China, too, they venerate the mystical number eight. They are doubtless the eight Reyshees of India.

‡ Hatho Armenius, apud Bryant, ibid.

ancient tradition that the ark rested there; and, according to Tavernier, hard by is another village, where they suppose the wife of Noah to have died. The learned analyst, however, only mentions the notion to overthrow it, by adding, that, wherever the arkite rites were instituted, the same names were given to different places, Baris, Mene, Selene; that the particular name of DA MOAN, the village at the foot of it, is understood by the natives in the sense of the *second plantation*; and that these circumstances only shew how universally diffused throughout the ancient world was the tradition of the Mosaic ark and the general deluge.

In the present infant state of our knowledge in respect to India, and till the treasures, that lie buried in the deep mine of Sanscreet literature, shall be more deeply explored and made our own, whatever may be affirmed concerning the origin of the Hindoos; that is to say, the precise branch of the family of Noah from which they immediately sprang; cannot merit to be distinguished by any higher appellation than conjecture. Even the most successful attempts of this kind can only be considered in the light of fortunate guesses; yet still, if we find the whole country, in the most ancient Sanscreet records and charts, called by the Scripture-appellation of one of the immediate descendants, even the grandson, of Noah, and the name of two others of that primordial family, at this very day, throughout that vast empire, holden in the profoundest veneration, and considered as demigods, at least, in their system of romantic mythology, we have the strongest reason to conclude, that the Hindoos are descended, in a direct line, from the chief, by whose name their country, which they themselves denominate Cusha-Dweepa, or the continent of Cush, is distinguished; and that Bali, or Belus, and Rama, the deified heroes of their early history, are the identical personages recorded in sacred writ; the former, according to that authentic chronicle, being the first, and the latter the fourth, son of Cush. When it is farther considered, that Bali and Rama confer their respective names on two distinguished Avatars, as may be ob-

served in the ode above quoted, conjecture rises very near to the certainty of proof. To the consideration of those Avatars we shall presently return, and the very first that occurs, in its leading feature, bears such an immediate affinity to a stupendous event recorded in the Mosaic history, the destruction of an impious monarch, and the overthrow of an ambitious project to brave the power and vengeance of heaven, as scarcely to leave a doubt, in the serious and reflecting mind, of its direct allusion to the Nimrod of Scripture, that mighty and iniquitous hunter of men and beasts, the founder of the great empire of Babylon, and the first perverter of the patriarchal religion, by introducing among its pure rites the gross errors of the Sabian idolatry. A column bursting thunder, and the deity issuing from it under a terrific form, breathing flames to devour a blaspheming monarch, are events that have too great a similitude to the frantic attempt and fatal catastrophe at Babel to permit us to hesitate at the application of this Indian fable. But, when we take into consideration all the connecting circumstances; that the names of the principal branches of the tyrant's family are equally to be found in the dynasties of India and Babylon; that Nimrod, or, to give him his usual name in profane history, the elder Belus, was the father of astronomy after the flood, and is supposed to have built the Tower of Babel partly for astronomical purposes; probability, it must be owned, approaches very near upon certainty.

THE NARA-SING AVATAR, OR FOURTH INCARNATION OF VEESHNU, UNDER A FORM HALF MAN AND HALF LION.

The greater part of the history of this Avatar has already been detailed in the former volume, in a passage cited from Mr. Chambers, which it is necessary again to bring before the view of the reader, not only because it is a genuine translation, by an eminent Indian scholar, from a Sanscreet original, but on account of its forming, together

with another Sanscreet fragment of original historical matter in my possession from the stores of Mr. Halhed, a more complete relation of the events of this important Avatar than has hitherto been presented to that public, whose curiosity is now so justly excited to the investigation of the precious remains of Indian lore. This passage is preceded, in Mr. Chambers's narration, by an account of the Giant Hirinacheren, who, the reader may recollect, rolled up the earth into a shapeless mass, and carried it on his shoulders down to PATALA, (hell); circumstances that gave birth to the events of the second Avatar, in which, Veeshnu, in the form of a boar, is represented as pursuing that monster to his retreat, and bringing back the earth upon his mighty tusks.

According to Mr. Chambers, the younger brother of that gigantic dæmon was Hirinakassap, who succeeded him in his kingdom over the inferior world, and refused to do homage to Veeshnu. He had a son named Pralhaud, who, at an early age, openly disapproved this part of his father's conduct, being under the tuition of Sokeracharj. His father persecuted him on this account, banished him, and even sought to kill him, but was prevented by the interposition of heaven, which appeared on the side of Pralhaud. At length, Hirinakassap was softened, and recalled his son to his court; where, as he sat in full assembly, he began again to argue with him against the supremacy of Veeshnu, boasted that he himself was *lord of all the visible world*, and asked what Veeshnu could pretend to more. Pralhaud replied, that Veeshnu had no fixed abode, but was present every where. "Is he," said his father, "in that PILLAR?" — "Yes," returned Pralhaud. "Then let him come forth," said Hirinakassap; and, rising from his seat, struck the pillar with his foot; upon which, Veeshnu, in the form of Nara-Sing, that is to say, with a body like a man, but a head like a lion, came out of the pillar and tore Hirinakassap in pieces. Veeshnu then fixed Pralhaud on his father's throne, and his reign was a mild and virtuous one, and, as such, was a contrast to that of his father. He left a son named Namachee, who inherited

his power and his virtues, and was the father of Bali, the founder of the once magnificent city of Mahabalipoor.* Through the disguise of these fables, Mr. Chambers judiciously observes, we may discern some imperfect records of great events, and of revolutions that have happened in remote times, and they perhaps merit our attention the more, as it is not likely that any records of very ancient Hindoo history exist but in this obscure and fantastic dress. Their poets seem to have been their only historians, as well as divines; and whatever they relate is wrapped up in this burlesque garb, set off, by way of ornament, with circumstances hugely incredible and absurd; and all this without any date, and in no other order or method than such as the poet's fancy suggested and found most convenient. Nevertheless, by comparing names and grand events recorded by them with those interspersed in the histories of other nations, and by calling in the assistance of ancient monuments, coins, and inscriptions, as occasion shall offer, some probable conjectures, at least, if not important discoveries, may, it is hoped, be made on these interesting objects.†

Of the truth of these observations almost every page of this history will afford striking examples, and great exertions of candour will therefore, I flatter myself, be made in favour of an author, who has so few lights of genuine historical detail to conduct him through the pathless wilderness of the ancient annals of India. I will endeavour, however, to be faithful to such originals as I may be able to obtain; and, where I cannot hope to produce subjects of instruction to the reader, I will endeavour to procure those that may entertain him. In that hope I present him with the following more extensive history of this Avatar, extracted immediately by Mr. Halhed from the Seeva Puraun, premising two things; first, that the Metempsychosis is the basis of all their mythology, the grand agent that moves the vast machine; and,

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 158.

† Ibid.

secondly, that the tremendous austerities, voluntarily undergonè and long continued in by the Hindoos, are supposed to give the devotee power even over the elements of nature, to arrest the orbs of heaven in their rapid career, to disarm Veeshnu of his thunder, and almost avail to annul the absolute decrees of fate.

As we are now of necessity somewhat immersed in the contests of the good and evil genii, that is, the good and evil spirits that agitate the mind, variable and fluctuating, of human beings, now ardent in virtue and now furious in guilt; those dreadful contests for the empire of the renovated world which disurbed its peace in the infancy of its duration; which, in fact, form the great basis of ancient mythology; and of which, while the former are distinguished by the title of good and benevolent, the sons of light, the favoured of Jove, the latter are stigmatised as giants and Titans, the sons of darkness and earth: while we are engaged, I say, in thus considering their mutual struggles, it may not be amiss to warn the reader against entertaining suspicions so injurious to the principles of the true patriarchal devotion as might lead him to suppose these dreadful penances, unprescribed by the Deity, unsanctioned by revelation, hostile to reason, and terrifying to nature, constituted a part of the primitive code. Pure and benevolent, like its author, the primitive religion was unstained with sanguinary rites; but, when the worship of deified heroes was established, the public devotion soon partook of the nature of their ferocious character. The increasing apprehensions, which, from a confined and superficial view of Providence, men began to entertain of the agency of evil dæmons in the government of the world, gradually deepened the gloom of religious terror. Expiations and penances of the most dreadful kind were multiplied without end and without number, while the Deity was seen arrayed only in the ensigns of terror, and frowning with an aspect of vengeance.

Of the length, the number, and the severities, of their penances, there is a remarkable display given, in the Pooraun just cited, in the

instance of Tarekee, the giant, the Indian term for an overgrown tyrant, one of the most powerful and malignant of all the degraded spirits. Indeed his character very much resembles that of Satan himself; and there are circumstances in his history that naturally lead us to suspect the whole to be founded on obscure traditions of the war in heaven, and the overthrow of the arch apostate by the superior power of the Divine Leader of the faithful angelic bands, leagued against their rebel comrades, personified, throughout the Indian drama, by Skanda, the god of the heavenly armies, the renowned Escander of the ancient Persian legends before the time of Alexander. The history of the penances of Tarekee can alone be noticed here; the whole of that curious narration would be too long for insertion, and too great an interruption to the events of the Avatar under consideration. I shall hereafter, however, relieve the wearisomeness of graver historical narration, by presenting it to the reader, who will be pleased to remember, that, by these extraordinary details of penitentiary sufferings, the Hindoo priests aim to vindicate the conduct of Providence, in permitting guilt to ascend to such exalted stations as were attained to by the Giant Tarekee and the impious Bali.

AUSTERITIES OF TAREKEE, THE DITYE, AND THEIR REWARDS: EXTRACTED FROM THE SEEVA POORAUN BY MR. HALHED.

The Reyshees again demanded of Soote an account of the death of Tarekee, and of the slaying of Treepoor, by Seeva; and to know how their exaltation and power were acquired. — Soote answered, "Well have you demanded. By hearing this legend shall the crime of all creatures be set aside. Listen then with fixed attention. Tarekee, the ditye, was of principal rank among the order of Rakshas (infernal spirits). His ambition was daring and unbounded, he was utterly destitute of all good, and was filled with the most implacable hatred against the whole human race."

In the wood Medhoo, which is on the confines of the kingdom of Brege, Tarekee selected a pleasant and beautiful spot, adorned with verdure and blossoms, and there exerted himself in penance and mortifications externally with the sincerest piety, but, in reality, the most malignant intention, and with the determined purpose of oppressing the Devatas; penances, such as credulity itself was astonished to hear; and they are here recounted.

1. For a hundred years, he held up his arms and one foot towards heaven, and fixed his eyes upon the sun the whole time.

2. For a hundred years, he remained standing on tiptoe.

3. For a hundred years more, he nourished himself with nothing but water.

4. For a hundred years more, he lived upon nothing but air.

5. For a hundred years more, he stood and made his adorations in the river.

6. For a hundred years more, he made those adorations buried up to his neck in the earth.

7. For a hundred years more, enveloped with fire.

8. For a hundred years more, he stood upon his head, with his feet towards heaven.

9. For a hundred years more, he stood upon the palm of one hand resting on the ground.

10. For a hundred years more, he hung by his hand from the branch of a tree.

11. For a hundred years more, he hung from a tree with his head downwards.

When he at length came to a respite from these severe mortifications, a radiant glory encircled the devotee, and a flame of fire arising from his head began to consume the whole world. Eendra, on whom depends the sovereignty of the celestial regions, began to tremble for himself, lest, haply, Tarekee, by these penances, should have intended to secure to himself *his* government. All the Devatas, also, being struck with astonishment, and full of grief, said to each

other, Has God fixed the present time for the general dissolution?

Those benign and virtuous beings, with their penetrating minds, having considered the matter, discovered that Tarekee, the ditye, having, for the better accomplishment of his own criminal purposes, secured the good-will of Brahma, unless Brahma granted his desires, would annihilate the world with the dart of his life-devouring fire. Upon this, they went and made their complaints to Brahma. "Oh Brahma, we only live in the shadow of thy favour, why hast thou withdrawn that shadow from us?" Brahma, lavishing upon them favours out of number and graces without end, thus addressed them, "Since this ditye hath performed exceeding adoration, I must first, in recompense for this, be bountiful to him; after that, I will do you justice." Accordingly, Brahma, extending his bounty to Tarekee, said, "Since thou hast practised very severe austerities, speak what is thy wish, for it shall obtain gratification." Thus, the ditye, after having performed nemeskar, (adoration,) thus explained himself: "Oh, Maha Raja! thou art the fulfiller of all desires. In return for all my adorations I make two requests. The first is this: that, among all created beings, no one in strength and force may be upon a par with myself. The second is: that, if ever a son should be born to the supreme Seeva, my death may proceed from his hand; and that, excepting that son, no one may be able to gain the victory over me." Brahma ordained "It shall be so;" and then disappeared. Tarekee, also, having closed his adorations, went to his own kingdom.

The dityes, who inhabited those regions, immediately, by general consent, conferred the sovereignty thereof upon him. Tarekee there so stretched out the arm of tyranny and oppression, that the Devatas and all the virtuous were reduced to the most intolerable difficulties, and *washed their hands of their lives.*

Eendra, in obedience to him, made him a present of his white horse Oochisrava; Cuvera, his battle-axe; Varuna, the horses of the

sea, of the first species; and the Reyshees of Kam-Deva, the milch-cow, and the deep rivers of their precious jewels. Besides this, whenever he heard of valuable jewels or other beautiful articles, he ordered them to his own house. The sun, also, out of fear of that ill-fated violent monster, altogether desisted from giving his accustomed heat. The moon, too, out of terror of that blood-thirsty fiend, appeared always at the full. The wind blew precisely as he chose; and the morsels of Devatas and Peetrees, (patriarchal pilgrims,) which they get from the men of the world, he drew to himself and devoured. In short, the whole world was managed at his command, and in this manner he continued absolute for a great number of years. The Devatas again assembled and made their deep and sorrowful complaints to Brahma.

Brahma informs them of the decree that none but a son of the divine Seeva should slay Tarekee; and mentions to them Seeva's residence on the mountain Heemachel, the Indian Olympus; and the prophecy of Nared, that he should espouse Parvati, the goddess who seems to be the Indian Juno; and advises that they should, by all means, endeavour to promote this match. In consequence, they address Eendra, sovereign of the world of spiritual beings, who, with much difficulty, persuades Cama, the Indian god of love, to assist them. Cama chooses Vasant, or the spring, for his associate, and goes to Heemachel with his wife Retee to shoot Seeva with the arrow of love, which arrow was made of mango-tree. Parvati (like Proserpine) was gathering flowers for an offering to Seeva, when he first cast at her a casual glanse; but his attention was soon taken off by the spring having appeared in undue season. This circumstance alarmed Seeva, who soon observed Cama on his left hand, with Retee, in the attitude of taking aim at him; at which he was greatly incensed, and, in his rage, such a fire beamed from his third eye that it annihilated Cama in a moment. Seeva then went away to Kilas, and Parvati, disappointed, fled back in terror to her father and mother. Nared now appeared to her, and advised

her by every possible effort to propitiate Seeva; for which purpose she undertook a long and difficult course of austerities on a secluded part of Heemachel, which, from her, was afterwards called Gouree-Sheekher. The event proved successful; and she had the good fortune to carry a farther request, that Seeva would marry her publicly and with great pomp and ceremony. On this, she returns to her father and mother, and he himself goes to Cashee (Benares), where, summoning the seven Reyshees, he sends them to propose the match to Heemachel, the mountain, and Meina, his wife; first informing them of the necessity there was that he should beget a son to slay Tarekee, the ditye; and that, therefore, he was determined to espouse Parvati. The Reyshees, having received their commission, go by the way of heaven from Cashee to the city of Heemachel, which is described as a most glorious city, where all the inhabitants were passionately devoted to music; and they shone like the sun as they descended from heaven. Heemachel takes them in his astonishment for seven suns, and goes to meet them, and receives them with great ceremony. They relate their mission, and Aroondhetee speaks in favour of Seeva to Meina. On the fourth day they depart in a fortunate moment, and bring account of their success. Seeva immediately goes to Kilas to prepare for the wedding, and Nared is sent to invite the guests and assistants, Brahma, Veeshnu, &c. and all the Devatas and Reyshees, to the joyous banquet.

The very interesting part which follows here, relating the splendid procession and marriage of Seeva and his bride; the birth of Scanda, the heavenly conqueror; the final overthrow both of the monster Tarekee and his three sons; and the consuming, by fire, of their three cities built of gold, silver, and iron; and their corruption by the example and influence of those evil dityes; shall be given hereafter. My intention, in the preceding extract, was to shew the omnipotent power of prayer and penance with the Indian deity, explanatory of the subsequent events of the Nara-Sing Avatar, to which we now return.

Of the order of those evil dæmons, that act so conspicuous a part in the Hindoo mythology and early mythological history, were the two brothers Hirinacheren and Hirinakassap. They had, in the preceding state, been of the order of happy and perfect spirits, and their important office in the celestial regions was to guard the portals of the palace of the divine Veeshnu; but, having insulted the four sons of Brahma, who had come to the gate to pay their customary devotions to the former deity, they were precipitated from that eminent station to wander through the Metempsychosis in an earthly form. The particulars of the combat of the former, under the name of the Giant Hayagreva, with Veeshnu, in the Vara, or Boar, Avatar, need not be again repeated; the latter, in order to do more extensive mischief in his new sphere of action, devoted himself to acts of severe mortification, and employed himself, says the Pooraun, ten thousand years in penance and in honour of Brahma, standing in a posture immoveable, till the very birds made their nests on him; but still he would not desist. Brahma gave notice to the Devatas, or good genii ranging the earth; and then granted his desires; which were, that he might not be conquered *by any being then existing, either man, deva, peree, or animal of earth, or air, or water; and that his death should happen neither by day nor night, nor on earth nor in heaven.* Brahma, vanquished by the power of penance and prayer united, assented; and the ditye, going from his presence, summoned all the other dityes, and began to reign over them with their consent, or slay all those that resisted. He gradually extended his power over Paradise and Patala, or the infernal regions; so that, on account of his sanguinary vengeance, all the other sovereigns of the world's vast circuit were cut off, or remained in entire subjection to himself. His arrogance at length rose to such a pitch, that he thought within himself, if even Veeshnu should then present himself, he would give the god of nature battle.

About this time was born in his house a son named Pralhaud, who was ever employed in uttering the name of Bhagavat, or God; and at

five years of age he was put under a tutor, according to the ordinance of the Vedas. The tutor was anxious alone to teach him the dark and occult sciences of the Rakshas (infernal spirits); but Pralhaud persisted in only learning that of devotion to Nara-Sing, and all his tutor's prohibitions were in vain. Those of his father and mother were not more efficacious; and the little Pralhaud, in the tutor's absence, even taught his school-fellows that one's natural father and mother were of no avail and authority compared with the supreme parent; and that this world was no more than a dream or an idea, and that the recollection of the Bhagavat should alone give motion to their tongues. Correction, however, and the fear of worse, operated on the other boys, and they dropped the name of Bhagavat; but Pralhaud resisted every threat with the utmost firmness, even unto death. He was thrown into the fire and the water without receiving any detriment; no sword could touch him, and, in the panoply of piety, he was perfectly invulnerable.

After ten thousand trials of his inflexible virtue, the impious and relentless tyrant one day thus spoke to the intrepid youth: "Pralhaud, you say that Bhagavat is present every where, and that he is enveloped by every part of nature; is he then in this pillar of the palace, or is he not?" Pralhaud replied, "Most certainly he is." The ditye, then, in great wrath, raised aloft the golden sceptre that swayed the world, and said, "If your Bhagavat be in this pillar, see only what kind of homage I shall pay him:" and, with all his might, struck the pillar. On the instant of the blow, a tremendous voice issued from the smitten column, which caused an universal trembling throughout the palace. When it was evening, and the sun about to set, the pillar burst asunder, and Veeshnu started forth in the form of Nara-Sing, breathing forth terrific flames. The surrounding dityes fled away in amaze and horror, and such a dreadful noise was heard, that the mountains and the ocean forsook their places. Women with child miscarried wherever the voice was heard; and all the dityes were precipitated to the abyss of hell. Hirinakassap, how-

ever, stood firm in battle for two ghurries; but, as Bhagavat conceived that, if the contest should be of any long continuance, the dissolution of the world must inevitably take place, he dragged the struggling ditye by the hair of his head to a subterranęous vault beneath the threshold of the palace; there, extending him across his knees, (see the plate annexed,) tore open his belly with his talons, and, faithful to the instinct of the animal whose form he had assumed, quaffed the blood of the disembowelled monarch.

Thus punctually was fulfilled the promise of the deity, the reward of intense devotion, that he should neither be conquered nor perish by man or genii; that his death should not happen by day or by night, for it was between both; nor by any noxious animal in the course of nature; nor on earth nor in heaven, for his destruction was effected in an arched vault that sustained the portal of the palace.

At this event, says the Pooraun, all the Devatas, or good genii, rejoiced and rained flowers from above, and sang praises; while on earth the Gandharves and Assoors shouted and danced in transports of virtuous exultation. Pralhaud, in astonishment, joined with them. However, the wrath of Nara-Sing burned so excessive, that it was not appeased by the ditye's death; and the Devatas themselves were all afraid to approach him. At length, with united voice they called aloud on Veeshnu, in his preserving capacity, for assistance; urging, that, as he had before rescued them from the poison which arose out of the ocean, when churned by the evil dæmons, and received it in his throat, so now they besought him to relieve them from the flame issuing from Nara-Sing's mouth, with which they were tormented. Veeshnu smiled propitious, and Nara-Sing instantly vanished.*

There cannot be any stronger evidence brought than is here displayed of the truth of that assertion, in our former volume, that the Avatars are all historical allegories, combining a very considerable

* Manuscript of the Seeva Pooraun, translated by Mr. Halhed.

portion of morality and astronomy. The tyrannical sovereign, who made himself king over the whole earth, and even claimed divine honours, and disputed the empire of the skies with the Deity himself, could be no other than the first imperial despot after the deluge; that Nimrod, who, according to Mr. Wilford, is, in fact, celebrated in Sanscreet history under the corresponding name of NIRMARYADA, an ancient sovereign of Misra-Sthan, or Egypt, execrable for every species of tyranny and crimes; that despot, who hunted down men and beasts, and who erected a fabric intended to brave the skies, and render him superior even to the fury of the elements. The Nara-Sing *breathing flames* naturally brings to our recollection the Oriental accounts of the calamity at Babel, that state its subversion to have been accomplished by tempestuous whirlwinds and bolts of fire from heaven, which destroyed the artificers and crumbled to pieces the towering edifice. Let it also be remembered, while we are discussing this peculiar descent of Veeshnu to punish blasphemy and tyranny, that, in the simple language of Scripture, the Deity is affirmed to have *descended* at Babel: *And the Lord said, Go to, let us go down.* Gen. xi. 7. And how should a race of mythologists describe this descent after a more impressive manner than by assuming the similitude of an animal, the most formidable and powerful in nature, the lion, terrible in his anger; especially when another circumstance is considered, into the discussion of which I am immediately about to enter, that the bright star of the first magnitude in Leo was at that time in or near the solstitial colure, which, without doubt, must have had its influence with those who formed a theological system deeply tinctured with astronomy.

THE MORAL AND ASTRONOMICAL ALLUSION OF THE NARA-SING AVATAR.

There can be little doubt but that, on the division and dispersion of mankind which immediately took place, the colony, which migrated

to Egypt, with the history of the awful event, bore also the Indian mythological designation, and that the wonderful sphinx of that country, compounded partly of a lion and partly of those of a human being, owed its original formation to this Avatar; and I say it with the more confidence, because, on their hieroglyphic sphere and in their early annals, we have already traced the three prior Avatars; the fish-god, represented like the Matsya; the canis Anubis, or boar's head; and the testudo of Hermes. In opposition, therefore, to all the reveries of mythologists, who make the sphinx a sacred allegorical symbol, alluding to the sun in Leo and Virgo, when Egypt was inundated, truth compels us to refer the invention of that hieroglyphic to the Nara-Sing Avatar. It is a fact singularly corroborative of this hypothesis, that Colonel Pearse actually discovered, portrayed on the Jaggernaut pagoda, the sphinx of Egypt; and the reader will find it engraved in illustration of his letter on that subject in the second volume of Asiatic Researches. An elephant is indeed added below to the figures, but there is no accounting for the chimæras of Indian mythologists, and the superior parts of the sculpture exactly represent the blended character of the sphinx of Egypt having the female breasts, and the head and talons of the lion. Plutarch, de Iside et Osiride, confesses, that to the Egyptians themselves the sphinx was an inexplicable mystery; but we have now found its origin in India; and I may add, that the word itself, supposed to be derived from *sphang*, redundantia, alluding to the redundant waters of the overflowing Nile, is far more likely to be a corruption of the Sanscreet *sing*, a lion, than to germinate from any Hebrew or Phœnician radix.

Nimrod, the hunter, and properly the inventor of astronomy at Babel, of which he was the builder, is well known by various other names in the East. Among the astronomers of Chaldæa, the peculiar region of his sovereignty, he was known by the name of Orion and Belus; the latter name, however, more particularly applied by them to his son, the events of whose life follow next in order

among the Avatars of India. But there was also another branch of the great patriarchal family in Asia, a branch renowned for their early skill in navigation, and to whom therefore a knowledge of the stars was indispensable. This ancient race was the Phœnicians; who, blending truth with astronomy, conferred on him a title implying somewhat more than Bal or Belus, and meaning the sun in that full meridian strength in which it has been previously observed he attacked and overcame the Nemæan lion. The title thus bestowed was Hercules, under which name he was early portrayed on the ancient sphere; and long before the Greeks had engrafted upon the history of that hero, traditionally handed down to them, the exploits of the more recent personage, whom they, in their still more complex mythology, had exalted to the skies.

In truth, I consider THE SPHERE, of which we are in possession, as the work of astronomers of many distinct nations of the East, combining various circumstances of their respective mythology, and united into one solid mass, as well as appropriated to themselves by those of Greece, from whom it has descended down to posterity. That the Phœnicians were very early astronomers is evident from their vigilant observation, previously noticed, of the Ursa Minor, called from them Phœnice, and of the star in that constellation, called the pole-star; that star which Eternal Providence, willing that his creatures, wheresoever dispersed over the face of the globe, should be united in social harmony, fixed in the centre of the arctic circle, as an unerring guide to direct their travels by land and their voyages by sea. Whensoever I cast my eyes upon that sphere, methinks I see a vast though confused volume of hieroglyphics, the most ancient and authentic in the world, and containing much of the history of the primæval characters and events of most celebrity in the early post-diluvian ages. Among those, none was more conspicuous than the Phœnician and Indian Hercules, who was doubtless the most ancient of all those upon whom antiquity conferred that celebrated name. The history of Hercules, of whom no less than

three are enumerated, however, alludes to and embraces too many important points in early mythological story for me to enter at any length into discussions concerning either his real or fictitious exploits. There is the greatest probability to suppose, (for, to certainty we cannot arrive,) that the ancients, as they designated Noah by Dionysius, under the character and exploits of this first, or Phœnician, Hercules, shadowed out the martial character and daring feats, not only of Nimrod, the father, but of his son, also distinguished by the name of Baal, Bal, and Balin, and which make so conspicuous a figure in the earliest historical periods of every Oriental empire.

The astronomical history of Orion has been already detailed: it is, however, very deserving of notice while we are upon this Avatar, that the Greater Dog, according to Hyde, is in Syriac called Kelbo Gavoro, Canis Gigantis, sive ORIONIS.* In after-ages, the Egyptians, to whom the Canis Major was a constellation of very great importance, altered the mythology, and appropriated to their own fabulous history the dog of Orion, and, omitting the name of the Assyrian monarch, called it Sirius and Osiris, simply the dog-star, by which name it descended to the Greeks, and from the Greeks to us.

The moral, inculcated throughout the whole of this Avatar, is sublime and admirable. We are, in the first place, taught by it, that repentance and prayer are omnipotent with the Deity, and that their reward is certain and ample; that, however, when virtue thus rewarded and exalted again suffers a relapse into the enormity of vice, and the reformed penitent becomes insolent to God and arrogant to man, vengeance is at hand to crush his overgrown tyranny; while Pralhaud exhibits to us a noble pattern of exemplary piety in youth, inflexible amidst all the splendid temptations of a licentious court, and unawed by the vindictive menaces of a despotic and sanguinary parent. The secretary of Akber, after relating this Avatar,

* Dr. Hyde's Ulug Beg, p. 53.

adds, from other sources of information, that Nara-Sing, after the destruction of the impious father, benignly turned to the son, and bade him ask whatever he wished for; when the pious young prince only solicited the speedy attainment of *muckt*, which is everlasting beatitude in the presence of that God, whom he had so zealously served.* I cannot avoid remarking, though chronology forbids the supposition of their identity, that this character of Pralhaud very much resembles that of Abraham, who is said, by the Oriental writers, to have been thrown by Nimrod into a fiery furnace, because he would not pay adoration to fire; from which, by the power of God, he came out unhurt. Traditions, widely spread over all the Higher Asia, concerning the piety of that patriarch, and his resolutely resisting the prevailing idolatry of the corrupt æra in which he flourished, might have served as the basis of this extraordinary history, perplexed by mythology and obscured by the vast distance of time elapsed since the event.

In considering the astronomical allusion of every Avatar, we ought never to lose sight of the great, though secondary, object of the adoration of the Hindoos, the solar orb, in whose refulgent centre they supposed the throne of the Creator of the universe to be fixed. Hence they contemplated its ray with ecstasy, and venerated the hallowed flame kindled by its beams. To the relative position of the more conspicuous constellations, also, sedulous attention should be paid in an investigation of this nature, because the ancients conceived them to be the receptacles of elevated spirits, who had finished the terrestrial journey, and of genii commissioned to superintend the revolution of the orbs, and regulate the vast economy of nature. The splendid star, from its position called Cor Leonis, or Heart of the Lion, one of the most brilliant of the heavens, about the period of the dispersion, was, we are certain, from retrogade calculation as well as the astronomical books of the ancient Persians, in the sol-

* Ayeen Akbery, vol. i. p. 236.

stitial colure,* and therefore must have been at that time, to the rising astronomers of the Chaldæan school, an interesting object of peculiar and unwearied attention. The irresistable energy and distinguished eminence of that supreme sovereign of the beastly train, whose name was conferred upon the constellation, gave additional force to the allegory; and therefore it was feigned, that the sun, pouring the fierce ardour of his summer beam from the lion, then a solstitial sign, with his devouring fire consumed the blasphemer, and blasted the daring project of his gigantic ambition. Independently, however, of this remarkable fact, Leo being one of the forty-eight oldest-formed constellations and also a zodiacal asterism, the symbol might be intended only to designate the period of the year when the awful event took place, as the Matsya, I have contended, occurred when the sun was in the watery sign of Pisces. The inseparable connection that subsisted between the astronomical and theological system of the ancients justifies my persevering in this mode of interpreting the Indian mythology, and we shall find a singular corroboration of the propriety of so doing in the next Avatar, in which the planet Venus acts a very conspicuous part. The Virgo of Egypt, however, can have no active part to perform in the Indian drama; for, all the Avatars are male, representing the sun under the similitude of a conqueror, young and vigorous, as the Greeks represented their Hercules, when he toiled through his twelve labours, (which possibly may be only a copy of Veeshnu in the Avatars,) and it will be remembered that his most famous exploit was with a lion; the Nemæan lion, exalted to the sphere with the epithet Herculeus often conferred, in consequence, on that whole constellation:

> LEO, flammiferis æstibus ardens,
> Iterum a cœlo cadet Herculeus.

Hercules and the Nemæan lion, therefore, seem to be only varieties of the Nara-Sing. Mithra with his lion are the same; it is still the

* Consult M. Bailli's Astronomie Ancienne, p. 13.

lion of the sphere : and the radiant youth, conquering the savage, or conquering by its means, is still the sun. Hence the priests of Mithra were actually termed lions, from being invested, during the pomps of that deity, with the skins of that animal ; and the mysteries themselves were called leonticæ. Hence Hercules combated, clothed with the lion's skin ; and the Heraclidæ and Alexander delighted to array themselves in the dress of their vaunted progenitor. With this Avatar, the Satya Yug, or Saturnian age of the Hindoos, closes, comprising four Avatars; and containing, according to the computations of their sacred books, the enormous amount of one million seven hundred and twenty thousand years ; for the full explanation of which, the reader is referred to the ample details concerning those Yugs in the former volume.* Though it may not be improper, at the end of every Yug, generally to state, that they are plainly nothing more than astronomical periods, founded on the basis of the precession of equinoxes of fifty-four seconds more or less times repeated, according to the number of Avatars in each Yug, as is apparent in the accurate calculations there presented him, from the valuable manuscript of Mr. Burrow.

* Vol. i. p. 301.

END OF THE SATYA YUG, OR FIRST INDIAN PERIOD.

CHAPTER II.

In which the Author vindicates himself from the Charge of SYSTEM, *and enumerates a Variety of striking additional Facts, principally relative to Geography and History in the earliest Ages, and by which it is proved, that the ancient Sanscreet Writings decidedly corroborate the Mosaic Records.*

THE history of the Satya Yug being concluded, before I enter on the history of the TRETA Yug, the next in order of time and events, I feel it necessary to endeavour to obviate an objection, urged with persevering clamour against this History, that, in it, every thing is sacrificed to the support of the Mosaic writings; and to vindicate myself from the charge of bending every thing down to a favourite system.

At the very commencement of this History, in the most unreserved manner I declared the basis on which, in writing it, I intended to proceed; and confessed myself to be, by no means, one of that class of sceptical writers, so numerous in the present age, and who are of opinion, that the early records of the Hebrew nation are not less fabulous and mythological than those of other nations; for, in truth, I never saw any thing of a mythological cast in them: nor have I been induced, by any arguments hitherto produced, to believe, that, instead of being the composition of Moses, they were the fabrication of a far later age, when the Jews had returned from Babylon, replete with the mystic learning and hieroglyphic theology of the Eastern magi.

It is not from any predilection to a *particular system*, but from *conviction*, that I have, through the whole preceding portion of the narration, contended for the palm of originality in favour of the He-

brew historian; considering Moses as the inspired source, and all the later pagan fabulists as the gross copyists and pervertors, of the sacred story that relates the birth, the fall, the destruction, and restoration, of the human race. With respect to the Hindoos, as it does by no means appear to me that they ever were acquainted with the Mosaic writings, they could only (I must again repeat it) obtain the knowledge of the great events, described, however absurdly, in their allegorical legends, but through the medium of traditions, preserved with more or less accuracy in the principal branches of the first great family after the deluge. To suppose that Moses derived his information from the Indian books through an Egyptian channel, as has been loudly and repeatedly asserted by our sceptical opponents, is the quintessence of absurdity; because, both the fountain and the channel are so deeply contaminated, that some part of the prolonged and multiplied mythology of the one or the other of those nations must have manifested itself in his relation; whereas, nothing can possibly be more concise or void of embellishment and affectation than that relation is from the initial to the ultimate verse that describes the events of the infant and regenerated world. I will present the reader with a very striking and convincing proof of the truth of this assertion, in a circumstance which I purposely omitted to mention before.

When Noah had descended from the ark, and had offered that *oblation*, which I have frequently remarked was recorded amidst the asterisms of the primitive sphere, (the ALTAR, with its vast column of fire and smoke arising from it, being one of the old forty-eight constellations,) in token that the pious sacrifice was acceptable to him, the Deity condescended to make a covenant with the patriarch; and, as a sure pledge that he would never again destroy the earth by a deluge, he placed *his bow* in the heavens; *I do set my bow in the clouds.* Gen. ix. 12. Concerning this covenant and this bow, its infallible pledge, the ancestors of the ancient Indian race had traditionally heard; but time, and the allegorizing spirit to which they

were so grossly addicted, had united to obscure the solemn fact. Mythology, however, seized and consecrated the symbol, and made it a prominent feature in her varied and complicated system, though its original purport and allusion were obliterated from human remembrance. One of the fourteen sacred things, which the churned ocean, after the deluge, disgorges, in the Courma, or third, Avatar, is the symbol alluded to ; and, if the reader will advert to the engraved plate of that Avatar, in the former volume, he will perceive the bow resting on the surface of the water of that ocean ; placed there, it should seem, to intimate, that it was the powerful charm which was to repress its swelling waves, and prevent their deluging a second time the agitated globe. Of this bow, which the Indians call *danook*, wonderful things are narrated; for, it belonged to a god, and the arrrow shot from it never failed to reach the object aimed at. But, though they have strangely transformed the celestial bow into one used in the battle of the genii, (therefore indeed still ætherial,) the period of its production, that is, immediately after the inundation, and its great celebrity in early Hindoo annals, mark its true origin, display its hidden meaning, and detect the fallacy of the delusive allegory. There does not remain with me the smallest doubt, that the bow *(Dhan)* of the Indian zodiac, which, on the Egyptian sphere, is designated by an extended hand grasping an arrow, and with us by the figure of an archer, or bowman, was the original asterism, and that by it was actually meant the bow of the heavens, or the rainbow. It is also a remarkable fact, and by no means to be omitted, that the Persian system of mythology, so connected with the Indian, arms the hands of their Mars, the leader of the celestial armies, with a rainbow, with which he makes war on the evil, or dark, spirits, eager with storms and deluge to desolate the earth. My authority for this highly-corroborative circumstance is the following verbal translation from the Persian poet HATIFI. " He bedecked the firmament with stars, and ennobled this earth with the race of men. He gently turned the auspicious new moon of the festival, like a

a bright jewel, round the ancle of the sky. He placed the Hindoo Saturn on the seat of a restive elephant. He made silken strings of sun-beams for the lute of Venus; and presented Jupiter, who saw the felicity of true religion, with a rosary of clustering Pleiads. The bow of the sky became the bow of Mars, when he was honoured with the command of the celestial host; for, God conferred sovereignty on the sun, and squadrons of stars were his army."*

If the original asterism had been designated by any other object than a bow, it would certainly have been denominated from that object; but the whole asterism being known, in the oldest Sanscreet books, only by the term Dhan, the bow, there can be no doubt of its having been the distinguishing object. A powerful corroborative proof of it is, that the bow occurs as an asterism among the Nacshatra, or lunar mansions, presented to the reader in the preceding volume of this history.

The very same train of mythological reasoning and deduction, founded on traditions relative to the benign intention of the Deity, in establishing the magnificent bow as the glorious token of his gracious reconciliation with man, in all probability influenced the authors of the Greek mythology in their fanciful invention of the character of Iris, the messenger of Jupiter and Juno, the firmament and æther personified; in other words, the eloquent and beautiful herald of the divine benevolence to the compassionated human race. The Greeks properly styled her the daughter of Thaumas, *admiration*; and clothed her in a rich robe of the most beautiful and vivid dyes. In the same strain of allegory, they made the peacock, whose expanded tail displays such a rich assemblage of dazzling colours, the favourite bird of Juno. Mr. Bryant, after informing us that Iris is a corruption of EIRAS, an Egyptian word of the same import, very ingeniously derives from it the Greek *Eros*, love; not earthly, but divine, love; and, finding a bow was the symbol of *Eiras*, they gave

* Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 303.

Eros a material bow, with the addition of a quiver of arrows. It is a curious fact, that Carticeya, the Indian commander of the celestial armies, and the Persian Mars, to whom we have seen the rainbow is assigned, should be drawn in the pagodas riding on a peacock, and often clothed in a robe spangled with eyes; and, when we read that Carticeya is the son of PARVATI, the Indian Juno; and that, in fact, a peacock is often seen standing near her, without a rider, in many of those pagodas; we may rest assured that such a similarity of ideas between nations so distant and unconnected could not possibly have arisen by chance, but that the system must have originated with the elder or Oriental nation; a nation that equally disdained to borrow from another its science or its religion. The very same train of just reasoning, founded on analogy, leads to a discovery of the true character and origin of the Grecian IRIS, (the rainbow,) the messenger of Jupiter and Juno, the firmament and æther personified, in other words, the eloquent and radiant messenger of almighty beneficence to pardoned man.

Neither is it the effect of system that I have ventured to refer so large a portion of the preceding Avatars to an astronomical origin, since they have all more or less very evident allusion to the constellations, as has been already, I trust, satisfactorily proved; and, as the succeeding legend, related both by Baldæus and Roger, from their sacred books, and relative to the Vara, will still more decisively shew. After the earth, by the miraculous power of Veeshnu, in the form of a boar, had been brought up from the abyss in which it had been submerged, and restored to its former position, on a near and exact survey of it by that deity, it was discovered to be somewhat more inclining to the south than before; a circumstance that very much perplexed Veeshnu, whom the legend, rather inconsistently, represents as unable to rectify this capital error. He applies, however, to a holy and learned saint, named Agastya, to exert those mighty powers which piety and prayer bestow upon the virtuous, in restoring the globe once more to a just equilibrium. The holy man

complied with his request; and, laying his book of devotion on that part of the planet which inclined to the south, presently set all right again. This relation I for a long time considered in the light of one of their romantic encomiums on the practice of intense austerities, and did not perplex myself to find out the latent meaning of so exaggerated a story. The second volume of the Asiatic Researches, arriving in England about the period of my being engaged on that Avatar, with that pleasure which naturally results from finding the infant idea started in the mind strengthened by the coincidence of other corresponding facts, I read the subsequent observation of Sir William Jones, in his essay that contains his researches into the astronomy of the ancients; that Agastya was an ancient sage of profound learning and piety, and that he was canonized in Canopus; which we know to be the bright star on the rudder of the Ship, which the Greeks denominated Argo, but which the great analyst of the ancient pagan mythology has successfully proved to be the ark of Noah exalted to the sphere. Now the mythological history of Canopus is, that he was the pilot of that sacred vessel, and was adored as the god of mariners among the Egyptians, who, therefore, placed him on the rudder, calling him Canobus, from *Cnoub*, the Coptic term for gold; in reference to the singular colour and lustre of a star, one of the most brilliant in the southern hemisphere. The circumstance of this star not being visible in any of the celebrated cities of Greece has already been noticed from the same author and Dr. Rutherford, in proof that the Greeks were not the original inventors of that asterism; and now we find in India a still more ancient mythology, which refers its presiding genius to a sage, who must have flourished in the very first age after the deluge, or he could not have been mentioned in connection with the Vara Avatar, which relates to the emersion of the earth.

If the character of Agastya, indeed, in the above-mentioned connection with this Avatar, had reference to the earth *solely*, we might still entertain doubts of its allusion to that of Noah; but, in addition

to this legend, there is enumerated another, wild and extravagant enough, as indeed all the Indian fables are, but which decisively points to that patriarch, as the lord of the ocean, the irresistible controller of its fury. The story is as follows:

Agastya is recorded to have been very low in stature; and one day, previously to the rectifying the too oblique posture of the earth, walking with Veeshnu on the shore of the ocean, the insolent deep asked the god, who that dwarf was strutting by his side. Veeshnu replied, it was the patriarch Agastya going to restore the earth to its true balance. The sea, in utter contempt of his pigmy form, dashed him with its spray as he passed along; on which the sage, greatly incensed at the designed affront, scooped up some of the water in the hollow of his hand and drank it off; he again and again repeated the draught, nor desisted till he had drained the bed of the ocean of the entire volume of its waters. Alarmed at this effect of his holy indignation, and dreading an universal drought, the Devatas made intercession with Agastya to relent from his anger, and again restore an element so necessary to the existence of nature, both animate and inanimate. Agastya, pacified, granted their request, and discharged the imbibed fluid in a way becoming the histories of a gross physical people to relate, but by no means proper for this page; a way, however, that evinced his sovereign power, while it marked his ineffable contempt for the vain fury of an element, contending with a being armed with the delegated power of the Creator of all things. After this miracle, the earth being, by the same power, restored to its just balance, Agastya and Veeshnu separated; when the latter, to prevent any similar accident occurring, commanded the *great serpent* (that is, of the sphere) to wind its enormous folds round the seven continents, of which, according to Sanscreet geography, the earth consists, and appointed, as perpetual guardians to watch over and protect it, the eight powerful genii, so renowned in the Hindoo system of mythology, as presiding over the eight points of the world. In the above, as in all the rest of the Hindoo legends, together with

the moral and mythological allusion, there is evidently contained a latent portion of astronomy, referring to the power of the sun, symbolized by Veeshnu, and to the combined influence of the constellations Canopus and Serpentarius; but, concerning their precise meaning, it would be as idle to speculate as it would be presumptuous to determine.

The very remarkable circumstance of the country, properly called India, being denominated in the Sanscreet geography CUSHA-DWEEPA, or *the continent of Cush*, has been already noticed. This must be allowed to be no small corroborating proof of the correctness of the Hebrew historian, in whose annals Cush is expressly said to have been the son of Ham, the eldest son, as Mizraim, whence Egypt is called in the Sanscreet books *Misra-Sthan*, was the second. Gen. x. 6. And it is surely natural enough that each country should be denominated from its first planter or conqueror. But it appears, that there are two Cusha-Dweepas: that just alluded to is Cusha-Dweepa *within*; there is one in Africa, which is called Cusha-Dweepa *without*; and the reason of that part of Africa being so called contains an important piece of early Oriental history. It is to be met with in the following passage of the celebrated treatise on Egypt and the Nile by the elaborate Mr. Wilford, and by him immediately copied from the Pooraun. By the information at the close, we are advanced one step farther in the parallel.

"CUSHA-DWEEPA *without* is *Abyssinia* and *Ethiopia*; and the brahmins account plausibly enough for its name, by asserting, that the descendants of CUSHA being obliged to leave their native country, from them called CUSHA-DWEEPA *within*, migrated into SANCHA-DWEEPA, and gave to their new settlement the name of their ancestor."

By Sancha-Dweepa is here meant Egypt; and the reason assigned for its being thus denominated opens to us an interesting piece both of civil and natural history, likely enough to have been preserved among the traditions of the Asiatics. The subsequent remarks also of

Mr. Wilford ought not to be omitted, as they are extremely just and pertinent.

"We must now speak particularly of Sancha-Dweepa Proper, or the Island of Shells, as the word literally signifies; for, Sancha means a sea-shell, and is generally applied to the large buccinum: the Red Sea, which abounds with shells of extraordinary size and beauty, was considered as part of the Sanchabdhi, or Sanchodadhi; and the natives of the country before us wore large collars of shells, according to STRABO, both for ornament and as amulets. In the Pooraun, however, it is declared that the Dweepa had the appellation of Sancha, because *its inhabitants lived in shells*, or in the caverns of rocks hollowed like shells, and with entrances like the mouths of them: others insist that the mountains themselves, in the hollows of which the people sought shelter, were no more than immense heaps of shells thrown on shore by the waves, and consolidated by time. The strange idea of an actual habitation in a shell was not unknown to the Greeks, who represent young NERITES and one of the two CUPIDS living in shells on the coasts of that very sea. From all circumstances collected, it appears, that Sancha-Dweepa, in a confined sense, was the Troglodytica of the ancients, and included the whole western shore of the Red Sea; but that, in an extensive acceptation, it comprised all Africa; the Troglodytes, or *inhabitants of caves*, are called in Scripture also Sukim, because they dwelt in *sucas*, or *dens*; but it is probable, that the word *suca*, which means a *den* only in a secondary sense, and signifies also an *arbour*, a *booth*, or a *tent*, was originally taken, in the sense of a *cave*, from Sancha; a name given by the first inhabitants of the Troglodytica to the rude places of shelter, which they found or contrived in the mountains, and which bore some resemblance to the mouths of large *shells*."*

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 236.

But this was not the only name by which Egypt was known to the Sanscreet writers. We have observed, that the second son of Ham was Mizraim; and the following extract proves that the usual name, by which Egypt is distinguished in Scripture, is equally applied to that country in India.

"Misrasthan is called also Misra and Misrena in the sacred books of the Hindoos; where it is said, that the country was peopled by a *mixed* race, consisting of various tribes, who, though living for their convenience in the same region, kept themselves distinct, and were perpetually disputing, either on their boundaries, or, which is most probable, on religious opinions: they seem to be the *mingled people* mentioned in Scripture. To appease their feuds, BRAHMA himself descended in the character of ISWARA; whence Misreswara became one of his titles. The word *Misr*, which the Arabs apply to Egypt and to its metropolis, seems clearly derived from the Sanscreet; but, not knowing its origin, they use it for *any large city*, and give the appellation of Almisran in the dual to Cufa and Basra: the same word is also found in the sense of a *boundary*, or *line of separation*. Of Misr the dual and plural forms in Hebrew are Misraim and Misrim, and the second of them is often applied in Scripture to the people of Egypt."*

The circumstance of the whole region of India having been, in the most ancient æras, denominated Cusha-Dweepa, from Cush, is exceedingly important; because, in the Avatar immediately about to follow, and with which I am of opinion the *regular* history of India, if it deserve that name, commences, we find the name of Bali occurring, and immediately recognize Belus, his successor on the throne of Babylon. Of him enough will be said in the ensuing chapter, which details that Avatar; but concerning Cush, his father, I am happy in being able to present the reader with the following particulars from the oldest records of the least-disturbed province of India, Cashmere.

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 243.

Cashmere, whose mountains form the northern barrier of India, lies nearest to the great range that runs through Asia, and on a part of which the ark rested. Remembering with horror the dreadful calamity of the deluge, the first colonies that migrated from Armenia settled themselves in the most elevated regions, and naturally journeyed towards those regions, from which they saw the greater luminary of heaven begin his daily career. Now the ancient traditional histories of Cashmere, as detailed by the secretary of Akber, who, with his master, several times visited that beautiful but mountainous region, and probably examined the records of that kingdom on the spot, affirm, that the whole immense valley, which its vast mountains surrounded, remained for many ages submersed in water, and that a celebrated Brahmin, of the name of Kushup, led thither a colony of Brahmins to inhabit the valley, after the waters had subsided. This very remarkable fact is rendered still more so by the additional account in the same book, that the civil history of the country, after its emersion from the overwhelming inundation, goes no farther back than about 4000 years, when the said Kushup, "a man remarkable for the austerity of his manners," led his colony thither. From the express words of this authentic book, which also add, that, "in the early ages of the world, all Cashmere, except the mountains, was covered with water,"* added to the above-mentioned strong corroborative circumstance, no doubt remains with me that the waters alluded to were the remains of the general deluge, and that the leader of the colony was either CUSH himself, the son of Nimrod, or one of the Cuthite progeny, assuming the name of the patriarchal head of the family. Various powerful reasons, but particularly the remarkable date, induce me to be of opinion that it was the former, and the same person after whom, as the colony descended southward, the whole country, as we have seen, was denominated. This circumstance fixes the period of the first colonizing

* See Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 179.

of India, where reason and tradition unite to fix it, in the very earliest ages after that deluge.

At every additional step we take in this ancient historical research new evidence arises in favour of the authenticity and verity of the Hebrew historian. Advancing a few pages in this learned dissertation, we find a considerable portion of Africa called, from Sharma, or Shem, SHARMA-STHAN; for thus Mr. Wilford, speaking of the heads of the Nile:

"We before observed, that the source of the NILA is in the extensive region of SHARMA, near the mountains of Soma, in the masculine, or *Dei Luni*; and that it issues from the Lake of the Gods, in the country of Chandri, in the feminine, or *Deæ Lunæ.* Sharma-Sthan, called also the mountainous region of Ajagara, is said, in the Brahmanda-Puran, to be 300 yojans, or 1476.3 British miles in length, and 100 in breadth, or 492.12 miles. The mountains were named Ajagara, or of those *who watch not*, in opposition to the mountains of Abyssinia, which were inhabited by Nisacharas, or *night-rovers*; a numerous race of Yacshas, but not of the most excellent class, who used to sleep in the day-time and revel all night. Mr. Bruce speaks of a Kowas, or *watching-dog*, who was worshipped on the hills of Abyssinia." This is doubtless in allusion to Sirius, the watch-dog of the skies. In the following passage he enters into other very momentous particulars: "Sharma-Sthan, of which we cannot exactly distinguish the boundaries, but which included Ethiopia *above* Egypt, as it is generally called, with part of Abyssinia and Azan, received its name from Sharma, of whom we shall presently speak. His descendants, being obliged to leave Egypt, retired to the mountains of Ajagar, and settled near the Lake of the Gods. Many learned Brahmins are of opinion, that by the children of Sharma we must understand that race of Devatas (good genii) who were forced to emigrate from Egypt during the reigns of Sani and Rahu, or Saturn and Typhon (evil dæmons, oppressors, and tyrants): they are said to have subsisted by hunting wild elephants,

of which they sold or bartered the teeth, and even lived on the flesh. They built the town of Rupavati, or the *beautiful*; which the Greeks called Rapta, and thence gave the name of Raptii or Rapsii to its inhabitants."*

Having traced through India and Egypt the vestiges of the dispersed race of Shem, the Sharmicas, we discover, in the following passage, the tract pursued by the sons of Charm, or Ham, unfolded to us by the same genuine original authority.

"We now come to the Hasyasilas, or Habashis, who are mentioned, I am told, in the Pooraun, though but seldom; and their name is believed to have the following etymology: Charma, having *laughed* at his father Satyavrata, who had by accident intoxicated himself with a fermented liquor, was nicknamed Hasyasila, or the Laugher; and his descendants were called from him Hasyasilas in Sanscreet, and, in the spoken dialects, Hasyas, Hanselis, and even Habashis; for, the Arabic word is supposed by the Hindoos to be a corruption of Hasya. By those descendants of Charma they understand the African negroes, whom they suppose to have been the first inhabitants of Abyssinia; and they place Abyssinia partly in the Dweepa of Cusha, partly in that of Sancha Proper."†

The whole of the above interesting details of an ancient geographical and historical kind will serve as a proper introduction to the still more decisive attestation borne by the Mosaic writings in the following extracts.

"It is related in the Padma-Pooraun, that Satyavrata, whose miraculous preservation from a general deluge is told at length in the Matsya, had three sons, the eldest of whom was named Jyapeti, or *Lord of the Earth*; the others were Charma and Sharma, which last words are, in the vulgar dialects, usually pronounced Cham and Sham, as we frequently hear Kishn for Chrishna. The royal patriarch, for such is his character in the Pooraun, was particularly fond

* See Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 300. † Ibid.

of Jyapeti, to whom he gave all the regions to the north of Himalaya, or the *Snowy-Mountains*, which extend from sea to sea, and of which Caucasus is a part: to Sharma he allotted the countries to the south of those mountains: but he cursed Charma; because, when the old monarch was accidentally inebriated with a strong liquor made of fermented rice, Charma laughed; and it was in consequence of his father's imprecation that he became a slave to the slaves of his brothers.

"The children of Sharma travelled a long time, until they arrived at the bank of the Nila, or Cali; and a Brahmin informs me, that their journey began after the building of the Padma-Mandira, which appears to be the tower of Babel, on the banks of the river Cumudvati, which can be no other than the Euphrates. On their arrival in Egypt, they found the country peopled by evil beings and by a few impure tribes of men, who had no fixed habitation; their leader, therefore, in order to propitiate the tutelary divinity of that region, sat on the bank of the Nile, performing acts of austere devotion, and praising Padma-Devi, or the goddess residing on the lotos. Padma at last appeared to him, and commanded him to erect a pyramid, in honour of her, on the very spot where he then stood. The associates began to work, and raised a pyramid of earth two *cros* long, one broad, and one high, in which the goddess of the lotos resided, and from her it was called Padma-Mandira and Padma-Matha. By Mandira is meant a *temple* or *palace*, and by Matha, or Merha, a *college* or *habitation of students*; for, the goddess herself instructed Sharma and his family in the most useful arts, and taught them the Yacsha-Lipi, or *writing* of the Yacshas, a race of superior beings, among whom Cuvera was the chief. It does not clearly appear on what occasion the Sharmicas left their first settlement, which had so auspicious a beginning; but it has before been intimated, that they probably retreated to Ajagara, in the reigns of Sani and Rahu; at which time, according to the Pooraun, the Devatas, among whom the Sharmicas are reckoned, *were compelled to seek*

refuge in the mountains. A similar flight of the Devatas is, however, said to have been caused by the invasion of Deva-Nahush, or Dionysius.

" The Padma-Mandir seems to be the town of Byblos, in Egypt, now called Babel; or rather that of Babel, from which original name the Greeks made Byblos: it stood on the canal which led from the Balbitine branch of the Nile to the Phatmetic; a canal which is pretty well delineated in the Peutingerian table; and it appears, that the most southern Iseum of that table is the same with the Byblos of the Greeks. Since this mound or pyramid was raised but a short time after that on the Cumudvati, and by a part of the same builders, and since both have the same name in Sanscreet, whence it should seem, that both were inscribed to the same divinity, we can hardly fail to conclude, that the Padma-Mandiras were the two Babels; the first on the Euphrates, the second on the Nile.

" The Sharmicas, we have observed, rank among the Devatas, or demi-gods; and they seem to have a place among the Yacshas of the Pooraun, whom we find in the northern mountains of India, as well as in Ethiopia. The country in which they finally settled, and which bore the name of their ancestors, was Sancha-Dweepa, and seems to comprise all that subdivision of it, which, in the Bhagavat, and other books, is Cusha-Dweepa *without*.

" Several other tribes, from India or Persia, settled afterwards in the land of Sharma: the first and most powerful of them were the Palis, or *shepherds*, who probably gave birth to the shepherd-dynasty of Egyptian kings."

That not a shadow of a doubt might remain as to the genuineness of the information thus extensively communicated by Mr. Wilford, Sir William Jones informs us, in an Appendix, that " he had examined the antient sources from which that gentleman had drawn so great a variety of new and interesting opinions; and that, after having read again and again, both alone and with a Pandit, the numerous and original passages in the Pooraun and other Sanscreet books, which the

writer of the Dissertation adduces in support of his assertions, he was happy in bearing testimony to his perfect good faith and general accuracy, both in his extracts and in the translations of them."

In proof of what he avers on this head, Sir William presents us with the following wonderful passage verbally translated by himself from the Padma-Pooraun.

" 1. 'To Satyavarman, that sovereign of the *whole* earth, *were* born three sons; the eldest Sherma; then Charma; and, *thirdly*, Jyapeti by name.

" 2. '*They were* all men of good morals, excellent in virtue and *virtuous* deeds, skilled in the use of weapons to strike with or to be thrown; brave men, eager for victory in battle.

" 3. 'But Satyavarman, being continually delighted with devout meditation, *and* seeing his sons fit *for dominion*, laid upon them the burden of government.

" 4. '*Whilst* he remained honouring and satisfying the gods, and priests, and kine, one day, by the act of destiny, the king, having drunk mead,

" 5. 'Became senseless *and* lay asleep naked. Then was he seen by Charma, and by him were his two brothers called:

" 6. '*To whom he said*, What now has befallen? In what state is this our sire? By those two was he hidden with clothes, and called to his senses again and again.

" 7. 'Having recovered his intellect, and perfectly knowing what had passed, he cursed Charma; *saying*, Thou shalt be the servant of servants;

" 8. '*And*, since thou wast a laugher in their presence, from laughter shalt thou acquire a name. Then he gave to Sherma the wide domain on the south of the snowy mountains,

" 9. 'And to Jyapeti he gave all on the north of the snowy mountains; but he, by the power of religious contemplation, attained supreme bliss.'

Sir William, addressing the Asiatic Society, immediately adds, "Now you will probably think, that even the conciseness and simplicity of this narrative are excelled by the Mosaic relation of the same adventure; but, whatever may be our opinion of the old Indian style, this extract most clearly proves, that the SATYAVRATA, or SATYAVARMAN, of the Pooraun, was the same personage with the NOAH of Scripture, and we consequently fix the utmost limit of Hindoo chronology; nor can it be with reason inferred, from the identity of the stories, that the divine legislator borrowed any part of his work from the Egyptians. He was deeply versed, no doubt, in all their learning, such as it was; but he wrote what he knew to be truth itself, independently of their tales, in which truth was blended with fables; and their age was not so remote from the days of the patriarch, but that every occurrence in his life might naturally have been preserved by traditions from father to son."*

To this let me add, by way of concluding this intervening chapter, his own solemn attestation, which, with every man of learning and virtue, cannot fail of having weight, nor of vindicating the author, who attempts, however humbly, to tread in his steps.

"Theological inquiries are no part of my present subject; but I cannot refrain from adding, that the collection of tracts, which we call from their excellence *the Scriptures*, contain, independently of a divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected within the same compass from all other books that were ever composed in any age or in any idiom. The two parts of which the Scriptures consist are connected by a chain of compositions which bear no resemblance in form or style to any that can be produced from the stores of Grecian, Indian, Persian, or even Arabian, learning. The antiquity of those compositions no man doubts; and the unstrained application of them to

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 400.

events long subsequent to their publication is a solid ground of belief that they were genuine predictions, and consequently INSPIRED."*

Such, candid reader, is the grand collective evidence, such are the corroborative facts, which, from a quarter the least expected, the ancient annals of a kingdom which have been idly supposed to be utterly subversive of the Mosaic writings, I have been able to adduce in their favour. These will, I trust, prove an ample apology for my having proceeded so far in the investigation, which, however, I must again repeat is intimately connected with the subject before us, *the Indian history in its most remote periods.* These will display to latest ages their inviolable verity; and at the same time demonstrate, that, if (as the discouragers of this undertaking are forward to assert) I have pursued a SYSTEM, it is a system founded on the basis of incontrovertible fact, and supported by concurrent testimonies, drawn from the records of *one* of the most ancient empires, if not the *most* ancient empire, of the world. In pursuing this line of argument, I have obeyed the dictates of conscience, and have endeavoured to do my duty to my *country* and to *society*; and I appeal with confidence to its wise and virtuous members for applause, and, what is far more important to a work of this magnitude, SUPPORT.

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 402.

CHAPTER III.

Exhibiting a comprehensive View of the real unexaggerated Chronology of INDIA, *so far as any fixed determinate Idea can be formed relative to its remote Æras, and commencing the History of the* TRETA-YUG, *or Second Grand Period; in which are included* THREE AVATARS. *The first of these, the* BAMUN-*Avatar, or Veeshnu descending in the Form of a Dwarf to confound the Pride and Impiety of the magnificent Bali, or Belus; probably the first regular Sovereign of India.*

BEFORE I enter on the history of the events of the Treta-Yug, since we are at length arrived at a period when kings, professedly human, began to reign in India, it is necessary that I should premise something more satisfactory than has been hitherto said concerning the chronology of India. With any exactness, however, to arrange a system of chronology so boundless in its retrospect, and so perfectly devious from all the known and established principles of chronology in other kingdoms of the habitable earth, would be a task impracticable for any historian, however indefatigable. The only method I can take in the progress of this history is to regulate that chronology as far as possible by the general and received computation of ancient periods, sanctioned by sacred, and admitted by the most authentic profane, historians; to compare annals, weigh well the course of events, and accurately note the periods at which they are recorded to have happened. As I am determined to give myself the utmost possible latitude in chronology, not hostile to the sacred records, I shall adopt that of the Septuagint, which gives nearly fifteen hundred years more to the age of the world than the Hebrew text and vulgate, and suppose, with Dr. Jackson, that the oldest and most renowned Belus, the founder

of the Chaldæan dynasty, began to reign at Babylon 2233 years before Christ. My reason for adopting this hypothesis, though attended with some difficulties which I shall not attempt to reconcile, is, that it affords that prolonged space for the transaction of the grand events recorded in the Asiatic histories to have taken place on the theatre of the infant world, and for the gradual growth and expansion of the arts and sciences, which they appear to have required. I would be understood, however, principally to speak of the early post-diluvian ages, to which, by this means, we obtain an addition of nearly a thousand years, between the deluge and the time of Abraham, when both earth and heaven were convulsed with the combats of giants, Titans, and other personages, celebrated in ancient mythology, and whose exploits, however exaggerated by the pen of romance, had doubtless some basis in fact and history.

Our adopting this extensive chronology, and fixing the commencement of the Indian empire at so early an æra after the deluge, will also, I presume, at once gratify the strenuous advocate for the high antiquity of the Indians, as a nation, and reconcile to that antiquity, bounded by such comparatively moderate limits, the believer in the Mosaic records.

With respect to regular ante-diluvian chronology, having already shewn the fallacy of the boasted *millions*, to which the Indian system of computation lays claim, there is, in my humble opinion, no very urgent necessity for at all entering upon the discussion. The hypothesis on which these volumes proceed is hostile to the arrogated eternity, but not the extended duration, of the system we inhabit. If the sceptical opponent of revelation will, therefore, condescend somewhat to relax from the extreme obstinacy and unreasonableness of his infidelity, and only allow, that, at some remote period, *the world*, instead of being necessarily eternal, *had a beginning*; and that it owed its existence and the disposition of its parts not to blind chance, but to the spontaneous and benevolent operations of an eternal, infinite, intellectual, Being; it is not my intention to enter into violent

and unprofitable altercation concerning the precise number of years that elapsed between the creation and the general deluge; an æra, concerning which we never *can* know any thing certain, nor is it at all necessary to our happiness that we *should*; especially as, concerning the duration of that period, even the Jewish manuscripts, the most venerable for age and the most respected for authenticity, materially vary. This very disparity, therefore, ought to have the effect of inducing all considerate persons, on so disputable a point, to form their opinions with candour, and regulate their decisions by caution. I have before observed, and I here take permission to repeat the observation, that it is not for a century or two, more or less, that we wage the contest with infidelity; but we cannot allow of thousands and millions being thrown into the scale. We are ready to grant the sceptic the most extended limits he can reasonably demand, in respect to the *time* of our planet's duration; but we can by no means admit the fanciful and impious hypothesis, that it has revolved either through myriads of ages or from eternity.

Arrian informs us, that there was a regular succession of Indian kings, from the reign of Bacchus to Sandrocottus. They amounted in number to one hundred and fifty-three sovereigns; and their reigns continued during a period of six thousand and forty-two years. He adds, that the Indians computed fifteen ages to have elapsed between Bacchus and Hercules. In the very same manner we read in Pomponius Mela, that the ancient Egyptians "boasted to have had *trecentos et triginta reges ante Amasin*,"* or three hundred and thirty kings, who swayed the sceptre before Amasis, conquered by Cambyses, whose reigns took up a period of *tredecim millibus annorum*, or 13000 years. Both these dynasties, and the extensive periods of their reigns, may safely be referred to the same origin to which we have in a former volume referred them, ORIENTAL VANITY AND FICTION. It was during this period, he adds, that the stars had

* Pomp. Mela, lib. i. cap. 3.

four times changed their course, and the sun had set twice in the east: of which assertion the astronomy is as bad as the chronology is false; since, if ever those events had really taken place, they could not have happened within the limits of so contracted a period. These dynasties of Egyptian sovereigns, therefore, doubtless resembled the dynasties of India. They were nothing more than the *children of the sun and moon*; and the vast periods of their reigns were the revolutions of the celestial bodies. Still these mighty vaunts of their antiquity as a nation, however wildly extravagant they may appear, are comparatively moderate when we advert to another remarkable passage in Cicero, from whose relation we may conclude those assumptions of the astronomical priests of Asia were not unknown in the capital of the Roman empire; for, he acquaints us, that the Babylonians, and those *who contemplated the heavens from Caucasus*, (by whom he must mean the elder Persians and Indians,) had a series of observations extending back for 473,000 years.*

Astronomers, it must be owned, too forward to flatter princes, thus often employ the noblest of sciences to the most absurd, not to say the most disgraceful, purposes. But sometimes, under the guidance of really scientific and considerate men, it comes nobly in to the support of genuine history; and, in the present instance, the light which it sheds will greatly illumine our obscure research. Happily, in direct evidence of our assertion, that the first regular Babylonian monarch, after the dispersion, was Belus, and that his reign commenced at the period just mentioned, its own records may be fairly cited; for, the observations which Calisthenes sent to Aristotle, at the taking of Babylon by Alexander, in the year before Christ 330, are mentioned by Porphyry to have extended back for the term of 1903 years previous to that event, and consequently they began in the year before Christ 2233, and in the first year of Belus, the acknowledged father of Asiatic astronomy. Belus, therefore, seems to have been the son

* Cicero de Divinatione, p. 50.

of Nimrod, and the first great emperor of the Higher Asia after the dispersion, and was, in all probability, the Bali, or first regular sovereign of the Indians. Another circumstance of no small importance results from the moderate hypothesis that assigns this renowned Asiatic astronomer for the first great chief of the Indian empire, since it accounts, in a far more rational and satisfactory manner than any other, for the Indian nation having so early become able proficients in astronomy, and all those other abstruse sciences for which they were so celebrated in antiquity; sciences prèserved *memoriter* from the ruins of the ancient world, and transplanted thence by the Noachidæ and their first descendants in the regenerated world.

By fixing the commencement of the Indian empire at this (to European historians) most early period, but, to the Indian, most recent, I supersede all necessity of minutely examining the long list of kings of the solar and lunar dynasties, enumerated in Sir William Jones's Dissertation on the Indian Chronology, which are there given without any *particular* historical detail annexed to them; and, though I do not think myself authorized to omit them, yet I must observe it, as a thing not a little singular, that the last reign of the last monarch of the fourth age is fixed at 2100 years before Christ; that is, within nearly a century of the period which we have fixed upon as the most rational and probable for that commencement to take place. It is also remarkable, that the word Cush is found very little disguised in the three first names of the solar dynasty; in the last of which we recognize RAMA, stated in Genesis to have been the fourth son of Cush; and the third age begins with a monarch expressly denomiated Cusha; which circumstances appear to demonstrate this long catalogue of sovereigns (if, indeed, any other than nominal and allegorical) to be either the lineal descendants of, or immediately connected with, those great patriarchal chiefs called in our Scriptures Cush and Rama, and afford additional proofs of the coincidence of those Scriptures and the ancient traditional histories of India. The

remarks of Sir William Jones, which precede and follow his elaborate arrangement of these dynasties, will serve decisively to shew how utterly impossible it is to erect any substantial fabric of history upon a system of chronology, in which astronomy and allegory are so inextricably blended.

He begins by informing us, that, " In the present day of BRAHMA, the existing scene of things, the first MENU, our Adam, was surnamed SWAYAMBHUVA, or *son of the self-existent*; and it is he by whom the institutes of religious and civil duties are supposed to have been delivered. In his time the Deity descended at a sacrifice, and by his wife SATARUPA he had two distinguished sons and three daughters. This pair was created for the multiplication of the human species, after that new creation of the world, which the Brahmins call PADMACALPIYA, or the lotos-creation.

" If it were worth while to calculate the age of MENU's Institutes, according to the Brahmins, we must multiply four million three hundred and twenty thousand by six times seventy-one, and add to the product the number of years already past in the seventh Manwantara. Of the five MENUS who succeeded him, probably ante-diluvian princes, I have seen little more than the names; but the Hindoo writings are very diffuse on the life and posterity of the seventh MENU, (our Noah,) surnamed VAIVASWATA, or *child of the sun*. He is supposed to have had ten sons, of whom the eldest was ICSHWACU; and to have been accompanied by seven Reyshees, or holy persons, whose names were, CASYAPA, ATRI, VASISHTHA, VISWAMITRA, GAUTAMA, JAMADAGNI, and BHARADWAJA; an account which explains the opening of the fourth chapter of the Gita: ' This immutable system of devotion,' says CRISHNA, ' I revealed to VIVASWAT, or the sun; VIVASWAT declared it to his son MENU; MENU explained it to ICSHWACU: thus the chief REYSHEES know this sublime doctrine delivered from one to another.' In the reign of this sun-born monarch, the Hindoos believe the whole earth to have been drowned, and the whole human race

destroyed by a flood, except the pious prince himself, the seven Reyshees, and their several wives; for, they suppose his children to have been born after the deluge."

ICSHWACU, therefore, seems to be the first of Menu's posterity known in India; and partly in his own name, but more particularly in those of his two sons and successors in the Indian empire, VICUCHSHI and CUCUTSTHA, we recognize the first great patriarchal family of sacred writ, after the most distinguished chief of which the whole country was called Cusha-Dweepa. After this introductory information, Sir William proceeds, with the assistance of the writings and personal explanation of a venerable old Brahmin of Bengal, to arrange, as regularly as such a system would allow, the complicated mass of Indian chronology. It is necessary that the reader should bear in mind, during the perusal, that this essay of our author was composed in 1788, from which date the retrograde calculations ascend.

"The received chronology of the Hindoos (says our author) begins with an absurdity so monstrous, as to overthrow the whole system; for, having established their period of *seventy-one divine ages* as the reign of each Menu, yet, thinking it incongruous to place a holy personage in times of impurity, they insist that the Menu reigns only in every golden age, and disappears in the *three human ages* that follow it, continuing to dive and emerge like a water-fowl, till the close of his Manwantara. The learned author of the Puranarthapracasa, which I will now follow step by step, mentioned this ridiculous opinion with a serious face; but, as he has not inserted it in his work, we may take his account of the seventh Menu according to its obvious and rational meaning, and suppose, that VAIVASWATA, the son of SURYA, the son of CASYAPA, or URANUS, the son of MARICHI, or *light*, the son of BRAHMA, which is clearly an allegorical pedigree, reigned in the last golden age; or, according to the Hindoos, three million eight hundred and ninety-two thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight years ago. But they contend, that he actually reigned on earth one million seven hundred and twenty-eight thousand years of

mortals, or four thousand eight hundred years of the gods; and this opinion is another monster so repugnant to the course of nature and to human reason, that it must be rejected as wholly fabulous, and taken as a proof, that the Indians know nothing of their sun-born MENU but his name and the principal event of his life; I mean the universal deluge, of which the three first Avatars are merely allegorical representations, with a mixture, especially in the second, of astronomical mythology.

"From this MENU, the whole race of men is believed to have descended; for, the seven Reyshees, who were preserved with him in the ark, are not mentioned as fathers of human families; but, since his daughter ILA was married, as the Indians tell us, to the first BUDHA, or Mercury, the son of CHANDRA, or the Moon, a male deity, whose father was ATRI, son of BRAHMA, (where again we meet with an allegory purely astronomical or poetical,) his posterity are divided into two great branches, called the *children of the Sun*, from his own supposed father, and the *children of the Moon*, from the parent of his daughter's husband. The lineal male descendants in both these families are supposed to have reigned in the cities of *Ayodhya*, or *Audh*, and *Pratishthana*, or *Vitora*, respectively, till the thousandth year of the present age; and, the names of all the princes in both lines having been diligently collected by RADHACANT from several Pooraums, I exhibit them in two columns, arranged by myself with great attention.

SECOND AGE.

CHILDREN OF THE

	SUN.	*MOON.*	
	ICSHWACU,	BUDHA,	
	Vicucshi,	*Pururavas,*	
	Cucutstha,	Ayush,	
	Anenas,	Nahusha,	
5.	*Prithu,*	*Yayati,*	5.

	SUN.	*MOON.*	
	Viswagandhi,	*Puru*,	
	Chandra,	Janamejaya,	
	Yuvanaswa,	Prachinwat,	
	Srava,	Pravira,	
10.	Vrihadaswa,	Menasyu,	10.
	Dhundhumara,	Charupada,	
	Dridhaswa,	Sudyu,	
	Heryaswa,	Bahugava,	
	Nicumbha,	Sanyati,	
15.	Crisaswa,	Ahanyati,*	15.
	Senajit,	Raudraswa,	
	Yuvanaswa,	Riteyush,	
	Mandhatri,	Rantinava,	
	Purucutsa,	Sumati,	
20.	Trasadasyu,	Aiti,	20.
	Anaranya,	*Dushmanta*,	
	Heryaswa,	*Bharata*,*	
	Praruna,	(Vitatha,	
	Trivindhana,	Manyu,	
25.	Satyavrata,	Vrihatcshetra,	25.
	Trisancu,	Hastin,	
	Harischandra,	Ajamidha,	
	Rohita,	Ricsha,	
	Harita,	Samwarana,	
30.	Champa,	*Curu*,	30.
	Sudeva,	*Jahnu*,	
	Vijaya,	Suratha,	
	Bharuca,	Viduratha	
	Vrica,	Sarvabhauma,	
35.	Bahuca,	Jayatsena,	35.
	Sagara,	Radhica,	
	Asamanjas,	Ayutayush,	

	SUN.	*MOON.*	
	Ansumat,	Acrodhana,	
	Bhagiratha,	Devatithi,	
40.	Sruta,	Ricsha,	40.
	Nabha,	*Dilipa,*	
	Sindhudwipa,	Pratipa,	
	Ayutayush,	Santanu,	
	Ritaperna,	*Vichitravirya,*	
45.	Saudasa,	Pandu,	45.
	Asmaca,	*Yudhishthir.)*	
	Mulaca,		
	Dasaratha,		
	Aidabidi,		
50.	Viswasaha,		
	Chatwanga,		
	Dirghabahu,		
	Raghu,		
	Aja,		
55.	*Dasaratha,*		
	RAMA.		

" It is agreed, among all the Pandits, that RAMA, their seventh incarnate divinity, appeared as king of Ayodhya in the interval between the silver and the brazen ages; and, if we suppose him to have begun his reign at the very beginning of that interval, still three thousand three hundred years of the gods, or a million one hundred and eighty-eight thousand lunar years of mortals, will remain in the silver age; during which, the fifty-five princes, between VAIVASWATA and RAMA, must have governed the world: but, reckoning thirty years for a generation, which is rather too much for a long succession of eldest sons, as they are said to have been, we cannot, by the course of nature, extend the second age of the Hindoos beyond sixteen hundred and fifty solar years. If we suppose them not

to have been eldest sons, and even to have lived longer than modern princes in a dissolute age, we shall find only a period of two thousand years; and, if we remove the difficulty by admitting miracles, we must cease to reason, and may as well believe at once whatever the Brahmins choose to tell us.

" In the lunar pedigree we meet with another absurdity, equally fatal to the credit of the Hindoo system: as far as the twenty-second degree of descent from VAIVASWATA, the synchronism of the two families appears tolerably regular, except that the children of the Moon were not all eldest sons; for, King YAYATI appointed the youngest of his five sons to succeed him in India, and allotted inferior kingdoms to the other four, who had offended him: part of the Dacshin, or the south, to YADU, the ancestor of CRISHNA; the north to ANU; the east to DRUHYA; and the west to TURVASU, from whom the Pandits believe, or pretend to believe, in compliment to our nation, that we are descended. But of the subsequent degrees in the lunar line they know so little, that, unable to supply a considerable interval between BHARAT and VITATHA, whom they call his son and successor, they are under a necessity of asserting, that the great ancestor of YUDHISHTHIR actually reigned seven-and-twenty thousand years; a fable of the same class with that of his wonderful birth, which is the subject of a beautiful Indian drama. Now, if we suppose his life to have lasted no longer than that of other mortals, and admit VITATHA and the rest to have been his regular successors, we shall fall into another absurdity; for, then, if the generations in both lines were nearly equal, as they would naturally have been, we shall find YUDHISHTHIR, who reigned confessedly at the close of the brazen age, nine generations older than RAMA, before whose birth the silver age is allowed to have ended. After the name of BHARAT, therefore, I have set an asterisk to denote a considerable chasm in the Indian history, and have inserted between brackets, as out of their places, his twenty-four successors, who reigned, if at all, in the following age, immediately before the war of the Mahabharat. The

fourth Avatar, which is placed in the interval between the first and second ages, and the fifth, which soon followed it, appear to be moral fables grounded on historical facts. The fourth was the punishment of an impious monarch by the deity himself bursting from a marble column in the shape of a lion; and the fifth was the humiliation of an arrogant prince, by so contemptible an agent as a mendicant dwarf. After these, and immediately before BUDDHA, come three great warriors, all named RAMA; but it may justly be made a question, whether they are not three representations of one person, or three different ways of relating the same history: the first and second RAMAS are said to have been contemporary; but whether all or any of them mean RAMA, the son of CUSH, I leave others to determine. The mother of the second RAMA was named CAUSHALYA, which is a derivative of CUSHALA; and, though his father be distinguished by the title or epithet of DASARATHA, signifying that *his war-chariot bore him to all quarters of the world*, yet the name of CUSH, as the Cashmirians pronounce it, is preserved entire in that of his son and successor, and shadowed in that of his ancestor VICUCSHI; nor can a just objection be made to this opinion from the nasal Arabian vowel in the word Ramah, mentioned by Moses, since the the very word Arab begins with the same letter, which the Greeks and Indians could not pronounce; and they were obliged, therefore, to express it by the vowel which most resembled it. On this question, however, I assert nothing; nor on another which might be proposed, Whether the fourth and fifth Avatars be not allegorical stories of the two presumptuous monarchs, NIMROD and BELUS? The hypothesis, that government was first established, laws enacted, and agriculture encouraged, in India, by RAMA, about three thousand eight hundred years ago, agrees with the received account of NOAH's death, and the previous settlement of his immediate descendants.

THIRD AGE.

CHILDREN OF THE

	SUN.	*MOON.*	
	Cusha,		
	Atithi,		
	Nishadha,		
	Nabhas,		
5.	Pundarica,		
	Cshemadhanwas,	Vitatha,	
	Devanica,	Manyu,	
	Ahinagu,	Vrihatcshetra,	
	Paripatra,	Hastin,	
10.	Ranachhala,	Ajamidha,	5.
	Vajranabha,	Ricsha,	
	Arca,	Samwarana,	
	Sugana,	*Curu*,	
	Vidhriti,	*Jahnu*,	
15.	Hiranyanabha,	Suratha,	10.
	Pushya,	Viduratha,	
	Dhruvasandhi.	Sarvabhauma,	
	Sudersana,	Jayatsena,	
	Agniverna,	Radhica,	
20.	Sighra,	Ayutayush,	15.
	Maru, supposed to be still alive,	Acrodhana,	
	Prasusruta,	Devatithi,	
	Sandhi,	Ricsha,	
	Amersana,	Dilipa,	
25.	Mahaswat,	Pratipa,	20.
	Viswabhahu,	Santanu,	
	Prasenajit,	Vichitraviiya,	

	SUN.	*MOON.*	
	Tacshaca,	Pandu,	
	Vrihadbala,	*Yudhishthira,*	
30.	Vrihadrana, Y. B. C. 2100.	*Paricshit.*	25.

" Here we have only nine-and-twenty princes of the solar line between RAMA and VRIHADRANA exclusively; and their reigns, during the whole brazen age, are supposed to have lasted near eight hundred and sixty-four thousand years, a supposition evidently against nature; the uniform course of which allows only a period of eight hundred and seventy, or, at the very utmost, of a thousand, years for twenty-nine generations. PARICSHIT, the great nephew and successor of YUDHISHTHIR, who had recovered the throne from DURYODHAN, is allowed, without controversy, to have reigned in the interval between the brazen and earthen ages, and to have died at the setting in of the Cali-Yug; so that, if the Pandits of Cashmir and Varanes have made a right calculation of BUDDHA's appearance, the present, or fourth, age must have begun about a thousand years before the birth of CHRIST; and, consequently, the reign of ICSHWACU could not have been earlier than four thousand years before that great epoch; and even that date will perhaps appear, when it shall be strictly examined, to be nearly two thousand years earlier than the truth. I cannot leave the third Indian age, in which the virtues and vices of mankind are said to have been equal, without observing, that even the close of it is manifestly fabulous and poetical, with hardly more appearance of historical truth than the tale of Troy or of the Argonauts; for, YUDHISHTHIR, it seems, was the son of DHERMA, the genius of justice; BHIMA, of PAVAN, or the god of wind; ARJUN, of INDRA, or the firmament; NACUL and SAHADEVA, of the two CUMARS, the CASTOR and POLLUX of India; and BHISHMA, their reputed great uncle, was the child of GANGA, or the GANGES, by SANTANU, whose brother DEVAPI is

supposed to be still alive in the city of Calapa. All which fictions may be charming embellishments of an heroic poem, but are just as absurd in civil history as the descent of two royal families from the Sun and the Moon.

FOURTH AGE.

CHILDREN OF THE

	SUN.	*MOON.*	
	Urucriya,	*Janamejaya,*	
	Vatsavriddha,	*Satanica,*	
	Prativyoma,	Sahasranica,	
	Bhanu,	Aswamedhaja,	
5.	Devaca,	Asimacrishna,	5.
	Sahadeva,	Nemichacra,	
	Vira,	Upta,	
	Vrihadaswa,	Chitraratha,	
	Bhanumat,	Suchiratha,	
10.	Praticaswa,	Dhritimat,	10.
	Supratica,	Sushena,	
	Marudeva,	Sunitha,	
	Sunacshatra,	Nrichacshuh,	
	Pushcara,	Suchinala,	
15.	Antaricsha,	Pariplava,	15.
	Sutapas,	Sunaya,	
	Amitrajit,	Medhavin,	
	Vrihadraja,	Nripanjaya,	
	Barhi,	Derva,	
20.	Critanjaya,	Timi,	20.
	Rananjaya,	Vrihadratha,	
	Sanjaya,	Sudasa,	
	Slocya,	Satanica,	
	Suddhoda,	Durmadana,	

	SUN.	MOON.	
25.	Langalada,	Rahinara,	25.
	Prasenajit,	Dandapani,	
	Cshudraca,	Nimi,	
	Sumitra, Y. B. C. 2100.	Cshemaca.	

"In both families, we see thirty generations are reckoned from YUDHISHTHIR, and from VRIHADBALA, his contemporary, (who was killed, in the war of Bharat, by ABHIMANYU, son of ARJUN, and father of PARICSHIT,) to the time when the solar and lunar dynasties are believed to have become extinct in the present divine age; and for these generations the Hindoos allot a period of one thousand years only, or a hundred years for three generations; which calculation, though probably too large, is yet moderate enough compared with their absurd accounts of the preceding ages. But they reckon exactly the same number of years for twenty generations only in the family of JARASANDHA, whose son was contemporary with YUDHISHTHIR, and founded a new dynasty of princes in Magadha, or Bahar. And this exact coincidence of the time, in which the three are supposed to have been extinct, has the appearance of an artificial chronology, formed rather from imagination than from historical evidence; especially as twenty kings, in an age comparatively modern, could not have reigned a thousand years."*

Before I proceed farther in this chronological essay, I must be permitted to make a few observations on the portion which has already been presented to the reader, in confirmation of my own hypothesis, and that our way through the remainder may be more clear and regular.

In the first place I must remark, that, in the preceding statement, our learned chronologist fixes, for the commencement of the Indian

* Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 137.

empire, a period distant about *three thousand eight hundred years*, which is very nearly coincident with that on which I have determined for the time of the reign of Bali, or Belus, and whom he himself, in the chronological table hereafter exhibited, states to have flourished precisely three thousand eight hundred and ninety-two years before the date of his essay; a period approaching to within a very few years of our own calculation. In the second place, although we have seen that the Indians are not ignorant of the names of Sharma, Charma, and Japeti, the sons of Noah, their unbounded vanity has led them to select, for the head of their great solar and lunar dynasties, Buddha, in their mythology, a planetary god; though, from the circumstance of his marrying Ila, the daughter of Menu, or Noah, called Ilus by Sanchoniatho, he was doubtless one of the oldest patriarchal sovereigns after the flood, and possibly Ham, or Cham, himself, the real grandfather of Cush allegorized. By that name he seems to have been anciently known to the foreign historians of Asia; for, from whatever quarter Ctesias, whom Arrian, in his Indian history, chiefly followed, might have obtained his information, Budyas (Βȣδυας) is mentioned as second in order from Bacchus, the first great conqueror of India; and I conceive Bochart's interpretation of that name to be perfectly just, when he derives it from BAR-CHUS, *Chusæi filius*, the son of Chus.* With respect to the identity of Ham, or Cham, and the Indian Buddha, it seems in part to be proved, by the former being the inventor of astronomy in Egypt, their celebrated Hermes, as Buddha is reported to have been in India, and Mercury in the west. These names and this character are uniformly applied to one person; and they point decidedly to the son of Noah; that Cham, or Charma, as the Indians call him, between whom and his brothers Satyaurata divided the empire of the world, and from whom the whole kingdom of Egypt, one of the finest of the world,

* See Arrian in Indicis, p. 321, fol. edit. Gronovii, 1704; and Bochart's Phaleg. lib. i. p. 1?, quarto edit. 1674.

was anciently often called Χημια and Ερμα Χυμιος, and in Scripture frequently *Terra Cham.* But, in the third place, if no other objection held good, the very date of the æra of the last sovereign of the solar dynasty (2100 years before Christ) precludes all minute discussion concerning their character and exploits in a history aspiring to the denomination of *regular*; though, doubtless, concerning many of them, as Bharata, Judishter, Pandu, Dushmanta, Nahusha, their Dionysius, and Pururava, whom I can confidently pronounce to be the Greek Porus, all names of most renowned Indian conquerors and sovereigns in far later periods, in the subsequent pages much will occur. In my opinion, those names were selected, by some artful Brahmin chronologist, from dynasties greatly inferior in point of antiquity, and were artfully blended with names utterly fabulous, and characters the mere creatures of invention, to give to the whole fabrication an air of veracity, and establish a chimera on the basis of truth.

I now proceed to present the reader with the remainder of Sir William Jones's important strictures on the chronology of India, not only because we shall have future occasion to refer to them, but because in them is also comprehended the corrected chronology of Rhadacant, the native historian of India; if, indeed, that may be called *corrected*, which, at every step we take, and under the guidance of a most sagacious and penetrating judge, exhibits the most glaring marks of error and inconsistency.

KINGS OF MAGADHA.

Pradyota, year before Christ 2100.
Palaca,
Visachayupa,
Rajaca,
Nandiverdhana, 5 reigns, 138 years.

Sisunaga,	year before Christ 1962.
Cacaverna,	
Cshemadherman,	
Cshetrajnya,	
Vidhisara,	5.
Ajatasatru,	
Darbhaca,	
Ajaya,	
Nandiverdhana,	
Mahanandi,	10 reigns, 360 years.
NANDA,	1602.

" This prince, of whom frequent mention is made in the Sanscreet books, is said to have been murdered, after a reign of a hundred years, by a very learned and ingenious, but passionate and vindictive, Brahmin, whose name was CHANACYA, and who raised to the throne a man of the Maurya race, named CHANDRAGUPTA. By the death of NANDA and his sons, the Cshatriya family of PRADYOTA became extinct.

MAURYA KINGS.

Chandragupta,	year before Christ 1502.
Varisara,	
Asocaverdhana,	
Suyasas,	
Desaratha,	5.
Sangata,	
Salisuca,	
Somasarman,	
Satadhanwas,	
Vrihadratha,	10 reigns, 137 years.

" On the death of the tenth Maurya king, his place was assumed by his commander-in-chief, PUSHPAMITRA, of the Sunga nation or family.

SUNGA KINGS.

Pushpamitra,	year before Christ 1365.
Agnimitra,	
Sujyeshtha,	
Vasumitra,	
Abhadraca,	5.
Pulinda,	
Ghosha,	
Vajramitra,	
Bhagavata,	
Devabhuti,	10 reigns, 112 years.

" The last prince was killed by his minister VASUDEVA, of the Canna race, who usurped the throne of Magadha.

CANNA KINGS.

Vasudeva,	year before Christ 1253.
Bhumitra,	
Narayana,	
Susarman, 4 reigns, 345 years.	

" A Sudra, of the Andhra family, having murdered his master SUSARMAN, and seized the government, founded a new dynasty of

ANDHRA KINGS.

Balin,	year before Christ 908.
Crishna,	

Srisantacarna,	
Paurnamasa,	
Lambodara,	5.
Vivilaca,	
Meghaswata,	
Vatamana,	
Talaca,	
Sivaswati,	10.
Purishabheru,	
Sunandana,	
Chacoraca,	
Bataca,	
Gomatin,	15.
Purimat,	
Medasiras,	
Sirascandha,	
Yajnyasri,	
Vijaya,	20.
Chandrabija,	21 reigns, 456 years.

" After the death of CHANDRABIJA, which happened, according to the Hindoos, 396 years before VICRAMADITYA, or 452 before Christ, we hear no more of Magadha as an independent kingdom; but RADHACANT has exhibited the names of seven dynasties, in which seventy-six princes are said to have reigned one thousand three hundred and ninety-nine years in Avabriti, a town of the Dacshin, or south, which we commonly call Decan. The names of the seven dynasties, or of the families who established them, are Abhira, Gardabhin, Canca, Yavana, Turushcara, Bhurunda, Maula; of which the Yavanas are by some, not generally, supposed to have been Ionians or Greeks; but the Turushcaras and Maulas are universally believed to have been Turks and Moguls. Yet RADHACANT adds, ' When the Maula race was extinct, five princes, named

Bhunanda, Bangira, Sisunandi, Yasonandi, and Praviraca, reigned a hundred and six years (or till the year 1053) in the city of Cilacila,' which, he tells me, he understands to be in the country of the Maharashtras, or Mahrattas; and here ends his Indian chronolgy; for, 'After PRAVIRACA,' says he, 'this empire was divided among Mlechhas, or infidels.'

" This account of the seven modern dynasties appears very doubtful in itself, and has no relation to our present inquiry; for, their dominion seems confined to the Decan, without extending to Magadha; nor have we any reason to believe, that a race of Grecian princes ever established a kingdom in either of those countries. As to the Moguls, their dynasty still subsists, at least nominally; unless that of Chengiz be meant; and his successors could not have reigned in any part of India for the period of three hundred years, which is assigned to the Maulas; nor is it probable that the word Turk, which an Indian could have easily pronounced and clearly expressed in the Nagari letters, should have been corrupted into Turushcara. On the whole, we may safely close the most authentic system of Hindoo chronology, that I have yet been able to procure, with the death of CHANDRABIJA. Should any farther information be attainable, we shall, perhaps, in due time attain it, either from books or inscriptions in the Sanscreet language; but, from the materials with which we are at present supplied, we may establish as indubitable the two following propositions; that the three first ages of the Hindoos are chiefly mythological, whether their mythology was founded on the dark enigmas of their astronomers, or on the heroic fictions of their poets; and that the fourth, or historical, age cannot be carried farther back than about two thousand years before Christ. Even in the history of the present age, the generations of men and the reigns of kings are extended beyond the course of nature, and beyond the average resulting from the accounts of the Brahmins themselves; for, they assign to a hundred and forty-two modern reigns a period of three thousand one hundred and fifty-three years, or about twenty-two

years to a reign, one with another: yet they represent only four Canna princes on the throne of Magadha for a period of three hundred and forty-five years. Now it is even more improbable, that four successive kings should have reigned eighty-six years and three months each than that NANDA should have been king a hundred years, and murdered at last. Neither account can be credited; but, that we may allow the highest probable antiquity to the Hindoo government, let us grant, that three generations of men were equal on an average to a hundred years, and that Indian princes have reigned, one with another, two-and-twenty: then, reckoning thirty generations from ARJUN, the brother of YUDHISHTHIRA, to the extinction of his race, and taking the Chinese account of BUDDHA's birth from M. DE GUIGNES, as the most authentic medium between ABULFAZIL and the Tibetians, we may arrange the corrected Hindoo chronology according to the following table, supplying the word *about* or *nearly* (since perfect accuracy cannot be attained and ought not to be required) before every date.

Abhimanyu, son of ARJUN, year before Christ	2029.
Pradyota — — —	1029.
BUDDHA — — — —	1027.
NANDA — — —	699.
Balin — — — —	149.
VICRAMADITYA — — —	56.
DEVAPALA, king of Gaur —	23.

" If we take the date of BUDDHA's appearance from ABULFAZIL, we must place ABHIMANYU 2368 years before Christ; unless we calculate from the twenty kings of Magadha, and allow seven hundred years, instead of a thousand, between ARJUN and PRADYOTA, which will bring us again very nearly to the date exhibited in the table; and, perhaps, we can hardly approach nearer to the truth. As to Raja NANDA, if he really sat on the throne a whole century, we

must bring down the Andhra dynasty to the age of VICRAMADITYA, who, with his feudatories, had probably obtained so much power, during the reign of those princes, that they had little more than a nominal sovereignty, which ended with CHANDRABIJA in the third or fourth century of the Christian æra; having, no doubt, been long reduced to insignificance by the kings of Gaur, descended from GOPALA. But, if the author of the Dabistan be warranted in fixing the birth of BUDDHA ten years before the Cali-Yug, we must thus correct the chronological table:

BUDDHA,	year before Christ	1027.
Paricshit	— — —	1017.
Pradyota (reckoning 20 or 30 generations)	— —	317 or 17.
Nanda	— year after Christ	13 or 313.

" This correction would oblige us to place VICRAMADITYA before NANDA, to whom, as all the Pandits agree, he was long posterior; and, if this be an historical fact, it seems to confirm the Bhagawat-amrita, which fixes the beginning of the Cali-Yug about a thousand years before BUDDHA. Besides that, BALIN would then be brought down at least to the sixth, and CHANDRABIJA to the tenth, century after Christ, without leaving room for the subsequent dynasties, if they reigned successively.

" Thus have we given a sketch of Indian history through the longest period fairly assignable to it, and have traced the foundation of the Indian empire above three thousand eight hundred years from the present time; but, on a subject in itself so obscure, and so much clouded by the fictions of the Brahmins, who, to aggrandize themselves, have designedly raised their antiquity beyond the truth, we must be satisfied with probable conjecture and just reasoning from the best attainable data; nor can we hope for a system of Indian chronology to which no objection can be made, unless the astronomical

books in Sanscreet shall clearly ascertain the places of the colures in some precise years of the historical age ; not by loose traditions, like that of a coarse observation by Chiron, (who possibly never existed, for, 'he lived,' says Newton, ' in the golden age,' which must long have preceded the Argonautic expedition,) but by such evidence as our own astronomers and scholars shall allow to be unexceptionable."*

There cannot possibly be exhibited more direct or positive proof of the confusion and perplexity in which the whole system of the Indian chronology is involved than is displayed in the preceding statement, by an author, who, if ever any body could, was able to solve the Gordian knot. There are, indeed, certain leading events connected with the history of India, as, for instance, the invasion of the country by Darius, Alexander, and the Mohammedan generals, to which we can, with precision, and from the records of empires that have preserved their annals unviolated, assign incontestable dates : the æras, also, of Vicramaditya and Salbaham, of more recent fabrication, are known and can be ascertained. But, in regard to the more ancient periods, the whole is utter uncertainty and baseless conjecture, from the close combination with their history of those fables and that astronomy, which the Brahmins delight to intermingle with the annals of their primitive sovereigns, and which, however gratifying to the national pride, has poisoned its chronology at the fountain-head. The subsequent table, composed by our author, exhibits that chronology with as much precision as the subject will allow of ; and it is my intention to regulate myself by it as nearly as I may be able, though I am of opinion, that BUDDHA, who was an Avatar, and the next in order to Creeshna, should precede PRADYOTA ; and for holding that opinion I shall hereafter assign substantial reasons.

* Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 150.

A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE,

According to one of the HYPOTHESES *intimated in the preceding tract.*

CHRISTIAN and MUSSULMAN.	HINDOO.	Years from 1788 of our æra.
ADAM	MENU I.	5794.
NOAH	MENU II.	4737.
Deluge		4138.
Nimrod	*Hiranyacasipu*	4006.
Bel	*Bali*	3892.
RAMA	RAMA	3817.
Noah's death		3787.
	Pradyota	2817.
	BUDDHA	2815.
	Nanda	2487.
	Balin	1937.
	Vicramaditya	1844.
	Devapala	1811.
CHRIST		1787.
	Narayanpala	1721.
	Saca	1709.
Walid		1080.
Mahmud		786.
Chengiz		548.
Taimur		391.
Babur		276.
Nadir-Shah		49.*

As empires, like planets, must have an epoch from which to commence their career, for the reasons before stated, we cannot more judiciously fix that epoch than at the reign of Bali, or Belus, about two thousand two hundred years before the birth of Christ. There is solid ground for supposing, that the Indians have ingrafted a considerable portion of the history, properly Chaldaic and Persian, on their own. Still, however, those events, which we find making a part of their annals, we must consider as Indian, and detail them accordingly. With these previous observations, I proceed, in the next chapter, to the consideration of the events of the Bamun Avatar, the fifth in order from the Matsya; in which the same Bali is recorded to have been deprived of his newly-acquired empire by the interference of the deity for arrogance and presumption.

CHAPTER IV.

Containing Reflections on the remarkable Accomplishment of Satyaurata's Decision respecting the primitive Division of the Earth; and detailing the particular Events of the BAMUN, *or* DWARF, AVATAR.

AS we have gradually advanced in this historical research, fresh evidence has constantly arisen to strengthen our conjecture, that either Cush himself, or one of his descendants, assuming his name, led the first colony from Shinaar eastward, and peopled India, or, in other words, *the continent of Cush.* Egypt, also, we have seen, was taken possession of by detachments of the same warlike tribe, to the expulsion of the amiable and unoffending race of the Sharmicas, who are considered in India, according to Mr. Wilford, as Devatas, or good genii.* The name, as well as ferocious character, of the Kutheri, or Kattri, tribe, called Cuthæi by the Greek historians, seems to prove that cast to be the lineal descendants of the former. By the Sharmicas, the same line of argument induces us to believe the peaceful and religious tribe of Brahmins was intended to be designated; and it is remarkable, that, in the division of the earth by Satyaurata, while to the progeny of Jyapeti, or Japhet, were allotted all the regions to the north of the *snowy mountains*, or Caucasus, to the Sharmicas were assigned all the districts south of those mountains. To Charma, no specific portion was assigned; for his vicious conduct he was doomed to be the *slave of his brothers.* In direct opposition, however, to the holy patriarchal injunction, the Cuthite line of Charm, by force of arms, seized upon the portion of the Sharmicas,

* See page 44 above.

both in India and in Egypt, and kept them in subjection during the first ages. Still the prediction was fulfilled; for, in India, and in the sixth Avatar, we shall find, that the deity, descending in the form of PARASU RAMA, totally extirpated the Kuttri race of kings, and gave their usurped empire to the Brahmins; while, in Egypt, the Sharmicas, under the name of PALLIS, or *dynasty of shepherd-kings*, dethroned and exterminated the race of earliest Cuthite usurpers. In the line of Japhet, the Scythians, the patriarchal mandate remains completely verified, and the uncounted millions of human savages, that tenant the burning deserts of Africa, have ever been and still are, in the first instance, the slaves of the Sharmicas, or Shemites, of Persia and Arabia, and, in the second, of the European progeny of Japhet. The history of Bali, which we are now to detail, forms a link of the great chain, connecting the history of the two great empires of the ancient world, Assyria and India.

The BAMUN Avatar, as before observed, exhibits to us the instructive lesson of imperial pride and arrogance humbled by so insignificant an instrument as a mendicant dwarf. Mahali, or Maha-Bali, that is, the great Bali, had, by the usual means, (severe austerities,) obtained from Brahma, the sovereignty of the universe, or the three regions of the sky, the earth, and Patala. He was a generous and magnificent monarch; he did not oppress his subjects, nor was he guilty of any other great crimes. His ruling passion seems to have been an unwarrantable pride, that led him to look down on all created beings with supreme contempt; at the same time, he neglected to pay proper homage and render their due oblations to the Devatas. In short, in the skies he would acknowledge no superior; on the earth, he would allow of no equal; and he boasted, that, by this unlimited extent of his power, he could control even the infernal regions, and precipitate his enemies to the abyss of hell. The Devatas, or at least their priests for them, were dreadfully incensed at being deprived of their rights, the honey, the clarified butter, the delicious fruits, and other rich offerings, that used to load their altars; and,

in consequence, the former applied to Veeshnu, through the mediation of Brahma,. for redress. As the principal crime laid to his charge was the defrauding of those Devatas, exact retribution was resolved on in heaven, and he was doomed to be deprived of his crown, also, by a species of harmless fraud, which, it seems, the Indian deity did not think it beneath him to practise on this occasion. Veeshnu, descending for this purpose, became incarnate in the house of a Brahmin, venerable for years and piety, and, assuming the contemptible form of a dwarf, ill appareled, and apparently destitute of all human possessions, presented himself in a supplicating posture before the arrogant monarch just at the period in which he had been displaying his accustomed pomp at a banquet of unbounded magnificence; but at which he had again insulted heaven by not offering the usual tithe to the ministers of the sovereign deity who bestows all things. Bali, admiring the singularity of his figure, and smiling at his deformity, but at the same time compassionating his distress, bade him ask whatsoever he desired, and his request should be granted. Bamun, with respectful diffidence, solicited only a small spot of ground, three paces in length, for the purpose of erecting upon it a hut sufficiently large to contain himself, his books, his umbrella, and the drinking-cup and staff, which the Brahmins usually carry with them. Bali, astonished at the modesty of his request, advised him by no means to limit his demand within such narrow bounds; told him that all the kingdoms of the world were at his disposal, and that he need not be afraid of intruding upon his generosity, even though he should request ground sufficient for the erection of a large palace. " A Brahmin," replied the artful deity, " has no occasion for a splendid palace: his real wants are few, and by them his desires should be regulated. Only swear that you will grant me this humble request, and my utmost ambition is gratified." Bali, being about to confirm his promise to the mistrustful Brahmin by the usual ceremony of an oath in Hindostan, the pouring out of water from a vessel upon the hand of the person to whom it is given, (according

to the representation in the accompanying plate,) was interrupted by the planet Venus, a male deity in India, who whispered him, that the apparently-miserable mendicant before him was Veeshnu in disguise, and exhorted him to be cautious to what he pledged his solemn oath. The high-minded monarch, however, disdaining to deviate from his word, confirmed his promise with the required oath; and, bidding him stretch forth his hand, poured out upon it the sacred wave that ratified it. As the water, in a full stream, descended upon his extended hand, the form of Bamun gradually increased in magnitude, till it became of such enormous dimensions that it reached up to heaven. Then, with one stride he measured the vast globe of the earth; with the second, the ample expanse of heaven; and, with the third, was going to compass the regions of Patala; when Bali, convinced that it was even Veeshnu himself, fell prostrate and adored him; yielding him up, without any farther exertion, the free possession of the third region of the universe. Veeshnu then took the reins of government into his own hands; and, as an order of things, different from what prevailed in the Satya, was to commence with the Treta, Yug, he new-modelled human society: for, whereas in the former, or perfect, age, all property was equally distributed among the members of each of the great tribes, and in those tribes there was no disparity of rank or degree, he divided them into various subordinate classes, according to their talents and virtues, in an age, in which it is the belief of the Brahmins, that *one third part of mankind became reprobate*; consequently, by no means to be distinguished by the privileges, or continued in the possession of the advantages, enjoyed by an age when perfection universally reigned. In this Avatar, a circumstance, evidently allusive to Maha-Bali's character as an astronomer, and to the constellation Orion, in which his father, and possibly himself, was canonized, ought not to be omitted. While Veeshnu was extending his foot to take in the heavenly portion of his domain, and while Maha-Bali, at length convinced who was the august person that had defrauded him of his

empire, remained prostrate in humble adoration, the god Brahma came, and, pouring water on the foot thus extended, it was instantly converted into the great and rapid river Ganges; which, in their mythology and on their sphere, is actually represented as gushing from the foot of Veeshnu. Now I would wish to ask any of those critics, who are so loud in accusing me of system, for exalting the Hindoo astronomers as the original fabricators of the sphere, and stating the Greeks to be their servile copyists, by what chance comes it to pass, that the Greek asterism Eridanus, on their sphere, is also made to flow from the left foot of Orion? Surely to the elder nation, in time and science, is due the credit of the invention; and, when we find the fact, as it is found, described in their oldest Pooraums, and forming a part of the history of the Avatars, sculptured in the pagodas most venerated for their sanctity and antiquity, even incredulity itself can scarcely deny to the Brahmins the honour claimed for them in this, as well as in many other very curious and striking particulars. With respect to Maha-Bali himself, because he had not oppressed his subjects, though he had despised the gods, his crown was not wholly taken from him, but he was left for the remainder of his life in the possession of Patala, the inferior regions; and, as Patala was supposed to be on the south, because directly opposite to the north pole, where the Hindoo heaven and the palace of Veeshnu is placed, this circumstance may imply his deposition and banishment from Cashmere and the higher regions of Hindostan to the remote southern districts of the peninsula, where, in fact, we shall presently find ample remains both of his name and his exploits. After his decease, since his repentance was deep and sincere, Veeshnu informed him that he should be received up into heaven, and be placed there in a conspicuous and elevated situation, from which he might occasionally overlook those former subjects who had been so much the objects of his regal care. Maha-Bali, having, also, discovered considerable concern lest certain annual institutions, greatly to their advantage, which he had in the plenitude of his power or-

dained, should not be properly kept up, to quiet his apprehensions on that score, the deity farther decreed, that he should have permission once a year, *on the full moon in the month of November*, to revisit earth, and see in person that they were faithfully observed.

Whosoever the Bali, alluded to in this Avatar, may have been, whether of Chaldæan, or merely Indian, origin, the name occurs repeatedly in the pages of the future history, and particularly in that of a celebrated dynasty, established at a very early period on the eastern coast of the peninsula, whose capital, according to a former quotation from Mr. Chambers, was Mavalipuram; which word is only a corruption by the transmutation of *b* into *v*, and the final addition *am*, usual on that coast, of Mahabalipoor, or the city of the great Bali. This city is described in the Brahmin books to have been of an immense extent, abounding with magnificent palaces and stately pagodas, long since swallowed up by the waves of the incroaching ocean, except one most august fabric, covered with sculptures of a gigantic size, representing the Avatars, and oldest Indian mythology, hewn out of the solid rock, and known to mariners by the name of the *seven pagodas*. The gilded summits, however, of other pagodas, submerged in its bed, have been, within the memory of the ancient inhabitants of the place, visible at low water. The city, whose ruins may thus be observed, must undoubtedly have been modern compared with the times to which I allude; yet we know it has been immemorially the custom of the Indians to build cities successively on or near the ruins of the venerated abode of their ancestors; as Delhi, for instance, ancient and modern, on those of Hastinapoor, and Lucknow on those of Owd. That the etymology of the name is rightly derived he endeavours to prove by the circumstance, adds Mr. Chambers, that Bali is the name of a hero very famous in Hindoo legends, and so well known in those regions, that the river Mavaligonga, which waters the eastern side of Ceylone, has probably taken its name from him; since, according to the Tamu-

lian orthography, it means the Ganges of the great Bali.* But that which places it beyond all controversy is the genealogy of Bali, to be met with at the close of a history of the former Avatar, cited in his dissertation by Mr. Chambers, from Sanscreet authority, which expressly says, that the virtuous Pralhaud, having been seated by Veeshnu on the throne of his deceased father Hiranyacasipu, reigned with mildness, and by his piety exhibited a perfect contrast to the character of his father; that he himself left a son, named NAMACHEE, who inherited both his power and his virtues, and was the father of Bali, the founder of Mahabalipoor; a city so ancient as to be mentioned in two lines of the Mahabbarat, which expressly fix its situation to have been

South of the Ganges two hundred yogan,
Five yogan westward from the eastern sea.†

The yogan, taken at its lowest calculation, is a measure of nine miles; and, by the latter line, the Brahmins seem willing to inculcate, that the sea has receded from that coast forty-five miles, and which may probably be as precisely true as the former, which, according to that calculation, would place it far south of Ceylone. That a considerable recession, however, of the waters of the ocean has taken place is extremely probable, and, indeed, evident to the eye that only superficially contemplates this spot of stupendous ruins.

The reader will find the preceding part of the legend inserted by Mr. Chambers in the former volume‡ of this History; the remaining part, which introduces us to a farther knowledge of Bali, and the fate of this great city, being connected, in some degree, with the events of the Bamun, is here presented to him. In the perusal, he will still more clearly perceive the nature of their romantic legends; that they are a relation of the war of ætherial rather than terrestrial beings; and that a god is never wanting in their mythologic

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 147. † Ibid. p. 155. ‡ See vol. i. p. 455.

drama to solve any knot, however perplexed and difficult. The son of Bali was Banacheren, who is represented as a giant with a thousand hands. Anuredh, the son of Krishen, came to his court in disguise and seduced his daughter, which produced a war; in the course of which, Anuredh was taken prisoner and brought to Mahabalipoor; upon which, Krishen came in person from his capital, Dwarakah, and laid siege to the place. Seeva guarded the gates and fought for Banacheren, who worshipped him with his thousand hands; but Krishen found means to overthrow Seeva; and, having taken the city, cut off all Banacheren's hands except two, with which he obliged him to do him homage. He continued in subjection to Krishen till his death, after which a long period ensued, in which no mention is any where made of this place till a prince arose, whose name was Malecheren, who restored the kingdom to great splendor, and enlarged and beautified the capital. But in his time the calamity is said to have happened by which the city was entirely destroyed; and the cause and manner of it have been wrapt up by the Brahmins in the following fabulous narration. Malecheren, say they, in an excursion, which he made one day alone and in disguise, came to a garden in the environs of the city, where was a fountain so inviting, that two celestial nymphs had come down to bathe there. The Rajah became enamoured of one of them, who condescended to allow of his attachment to her; and she and her sister nymph used thenceforward to have frequent interviews with him in that garden. On one of those occasions they brought with them a male inhabitant of the heavenly regions, to whom they introduced the Rajah; and between him and Malecheren a strict friendship ensued; in consequence of which, he agreed, at the Rajah's earnest request, to carry him in disguise to see the court of the Divine Eendra, a favour never before granted to any mortal. The Rajah returned thence with new ideas of splendor and magnificence, which he immediately adopted in regulating his court and his retinue, and in beautifying his seat of government. By this means, Maha-

balipoor became soon celebrated beyond all the cities of the earth; and an account of its magnificence having been brought to the gods assembled at the court of Eendra, their jealousy was so much excited at it, that they sent orders to the god of the sea to let loose his billows and overflow a place which impiously pretended to vie in splendor with their celestial mansions. This command he obeyed, and the city was at once overflowed by that furious element, nor has it ever since been able to rear its head.*

Of the race of Bal there also anciently existed a famous dynasty of Rajahs in the northern region of Hindostan. They were sovereigns of Lahore for many centuries prior to the Mohammedan irruptions, and there we find them, at the period of those irruptions, recorded by the Arabian historians to have been possessed of an empire extending from Cashmere, in the north, to the borders of the southern ocean; themselves distinguished by the highest personal bravery, and their armies remarkable for their number and discipline. For, thus is the sovereign of Lahore described by M. D'Herbelot, citing those historians. He calls him *le plus puissant roi de l'Hindostan*; and, in another place, *Bal, fils d'Andbal, estimé le plus riche et le plus puissant roi de tout l'Hindostan.*† From them, also, the Rajahs of Delhi, of the name of Bal, are stated to have been lineally descended; and no less than twenty princes, under this denomination, are said, in the Ayeen Akbery, to have enjoyed its throne for 437 years in regular succession. In short, the word Balhara, immemorially used to denote the sovereign potentate of all India, proves the great antiquity and celebrity of this family, and may be adduced as no small testimony of their original descent from the great post-diluvian chieftain above alluded to. The fable, also, of the destruction of his capital by an inundation caused by the immediate mandate of the gods, naturally inclines us to suspect these allegorists of confounding a deluge, which subverted a great city, with a greater deluge, which inundated the whole earth.

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 156.

† Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 118.

ASTRONOMICAL AND MORAL ALLUSION OF THE BAMUN AVATAR.

On the supposition, which is at least exceedingly probable, that the Indian Bali is the same person with the Baal of Scripture and the Belus of profane history, and that a considerable portion of the events, properly belonging to the life of his father Nimrod, also called both Cush and Belus, are engrafted on his sons, the astronomical allusion of this Avatar will be clearly intelligible; and, as to the moral, it is throughout noble and expressive. *Sovereign of the skies* is an expression not inaptly applied to an astronomer of those days, who, intimately acquainted with the motions and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, was thought to command their influences, and might mythologically be said to be BAALSAMIN, or *the lord of heaven.* That high and arrogant opinion of themselves and contempt both of divine and human power, arising from a fancied acquaintance with the physical mysterious operations of nature, in this Avatar attributed to Maha-Bali, continues, it is to be lamented, too much even to this day the vice of astronomers; and their punishment in so signal a manner, and by such a contemptible instrument, was intended to serve as an awful lesson to nations so devoted, as were those of Asia, to the Sabian idolatries. By his being banished to Patala, I have hazarded the only explanation which I conceive to be consistent and rational; for, after all that has been said on the subject, it is not impossible, but that the Hindoo geographers, by the *three regions* allotted to all their more potent sovereigns, may allegorically mean to designate the upper, middle, and lower, regions of that vast portion of Asia; especially if we regulate our decisions by the oldest Sanscreet division of the country, which unites Asia to Sancha-Dweepa, or Egypt, of a part of which Sanchanaga, the *great serpent*, was king, and governed a race of serpents. Hence, probably, the south was allegorically called Patala; for, we have

seen that Patala is in truth the Hindoo hell; a hell composed of the most venomous of those reptiles. The Sanscreet writings constantly speak with horror of Egypt, that is, the Lower Egypt, then newly flooded by the waters of the deluge, and long undrained and uncultivated by the first monarchs, who, we find, from the Sanscreet name of Egypt, lived in rocks, formed of, or rather resembling, shells, and on the eminences of the highest mountains. Mr. Wilford, citing those writings, says, that the Nila, "having passed the great ridge, enters Cardamasthan, or *the land of mud*; which obviously means the fertile Egyptian valley, so long covered with mud after every inundation. The Pooraums give a dreadful idea of that muddy land, and assert that no mortal durst approach it. But this we must understand as the opinion formed of it by the first colonists, who were alarmed by the reptiles and monsters abounding in it, and had not yet seen the beauty and richness of its fertile state." Again our profound author observes, "that royal, or king, serpent is also called SANCHAMUCHA, because his mouth was like that of a shell; and the same denomination is given to the rocks on which he dwelt. The mountains of snakes are mentioned by the Nubian geographer, and are to this day called Hubab; which, in Arabic, means a snake in general, according to JAUHERI, and a particular species of serpent, according to MAIDANI. The same region was named Ophiusa by the Greeks, who sometimes extended that appellation to the whole African continent. The breath of Sanchanaga is believed by the Hindoos to be a fiery poisonous wind, which burns and destroys animals and vegetables to the distance of a hundred yojans round the place of his residence; and by this hypothesis they account for the dreadful effects of the *samum*, or hot envenomed wind, which blows from the mountains of Hubab through the whole extent of the desert."

With respect to that peculiar circumstance, recorded in the above Avatar, that Bali, after his exaltation to heaven, that is, the sphere, (the Hindoo heaven,) should have permission to overlook his vast empire, and even revisit the earth on the *full of the moon in the*

month of November, it exhibits still stronger additional testimony of the connection of their astronomical and civil history. Orion, it will be remembered, is one of the largest and most brilliant constellations of the north pole, that conspicuously overlooks the Higher Asia; and Mr. Sonnerat* informs us, that, in November, the Hindoos celebrate, by a splendid festival, this conquest of Bali by Veeshnu: they light up vast fires on that day, and illuminate their houses by night; because, they assert, Bali instituted the feasts of fire, that is, *the solstitial fires*; like those which the Druids anciently lighted up at the solstices in these kingdoms, a custom derived to them from their ancestors, the Belidæ; in truth, the immediate decendants of this very Bali. The Persians, too, according to Mr. Richardson, in the following extract, have immemorially kept up, towards the close of the year, a feast of fire, with the addition of a very curious ceremony, practised in regard to the bestial train, which must have originated in very remote and barbarous æras; æras probably remote as that in which the Nimrod of Scripture, whom the Alexandrian Chronicle acknowledges to be the Orion of the sphere, and even Homer himself represents, under the latter name, as *hunting wild beasts in hell*, extended the scourge of despotism over the slaves of Asia.†

"The anniversary of the great festival of fire among the ancient Persians was called Sheb-Seze, when their temples were illuminated, and large piles of fire blazed all over the kingdom; round which the people entertained themselves all night with choral dances, and various amusements peculiar to the season. Amongst other ceremonies common on this occasion, there was one which, whether it originated in superstition or caprice, seems to have been singularly cruel and pernicious. The kings and great men used to set fire to large bunches of dry combustibles, fastened round wild beasts and birds, which being then let loose, the air and earth appeared one

* Sonnerat's Voyages, vol. i. p. 140. Calcutta edition.

† Alexandrian Chronicle, p. 85. See also this History, vol. i. p. 361.

great illumination; and, as those terrified creatures naturally fled to the woods for shelter, it is very easy to conceive that conflagrations, which would often happen, must have been peculiarly destructive, where a people considered the extinguishing of fire by water as one of the highest acts of impiety."*

The reason of this feast being kept in India in November arose, probably, because Orion, setting *cosmically in that month*, was thought by the ancient astronomers to engender storms and tempests; whence that constellation is called, by the Roman poets, Nimbosus, Sævus, Infestus; and the observance of his institution at that particular period might be intended to soften the malignity and avert the vengeance of the genius of that orb.

* Richardson's Dissertations, p. 185.

CHAPTER IV.

Containing the History of the Sixth Indian Avatar; which exhibits Veeshnu incarnate in the Form of PARASU-RAMA, *by whom the Rajahs of the Race of the Sun are, for their Impiety, extirpated.*

I SHALL commence the history of the events of the two next Avatars, comprehending the history of two powerful sovereigns bearing the name of RAMA, by citing the decided opinion concerning them of the author, upon the basis of whose profound researches into the ancient annals of India I have all along proceeded, and shall continue to proceed, as the most firm and safe guide by which to regulate my own inquiry and the reader's judgement. Sir William Jones, in his Supplement to the Indian Chronology, after repeating, from various and increased evidence, his confirmed opinion that the Mosaic and Indian chronologies are perfectly consistent; that MENU, son of BRAHMA, was the Adima, or first-created mortal, and consequently our ADAM; that MENU, child of the Sun, was preserved, with *seven* others, in a bahitra, or capacious ark, from an universal deluge, and must therefore be our NOAH; and that HIRANYACÁSIPU, the giant with a golden axe, and BALI were impious and arrogant monarchs, and, most probably, our NIMROD and BELUS; adds, that he is strongly inclined to believe, that the three Ramas, two of whom were invincible warriors, and the third, not only valiant in war, but the patron of agriculture and wine, which derives an epithet from his name, were only three different representations of the Grecian Bacchus, and either the Rama of Scripture, or his colony personified, or the Sun, first adored by his idolatrous family.*

* Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 401.

From the striking parallel circumstances that mark their respective lives, it is evident to me, that we shall immediately and unequivocally discover, in India, the prototypes of both the Grecian Bacchus and Hercules. According to Arrian,* fifteen ages had elapsed between the reign of the Indian Bacchus and the Indian Hercules. On the supposition, therefore, that Rama, the son of Cush, or, as Bochart has it, BAR-CHUS, be, as is most probable, the true Bacchus of India, so there is the strongest reason to conclude that, by their Hercules, Creeshna, whose Avatar is the eighth in order, and whose life comprizes the greater part of the more distinguished adventures of the Grecian Bacchus, was intended to be designated. In proposing this conjecture, I advance, on the ground of argument often proceeded on before in this History, that, of two empires adopting the same train of mythologic reasoning, the credit of inventing, at least, if not of possessing, the prototypal character is the undoubted right of the elder; in truth, that the one exhibits the original without disguise, the other the abscured and mutilated copy. I shall endeavour faithfully to delineate that original in both instances, and leave the result to the unbiassed judgement of the reader.

Hitherto there has appeared an evident mixture of the Chaldæan with the Indian history. But in the history of the two Ramas, who were both natives of Hindostan, the occurrences concern India alone. We are still, however, in the region of fable, and genii and other invisible agents continue their operations on the historic drama. Indeed, the martial exploits of these warriors were of such an uncommon nature, that, without such assistance, it was impossible they could be carried on. Let it ever be remembered, too, that they are exerted on the side of justice and virtue, and that the Indian Avatars are nothing more than the Deity incarnate in brave and generous men, combating with gigantic oppression, and confounding the projects of daring ambition.

* Arrian in Indicis, p. 323, edit. Gronovius, 1704.

The first of these heroic Ramas is called Parasu-Rama, to distinguish him from the second, who has the appellative Chandra added to his name. This latter, as a conqueror, legislator, and reformer of public abuses, was still more famous than his predecessor, and it is on him in particular that the character of the Indian Bacchus is bestowed, on account of the wonderful similitude which many events of his life bore to those of the conqueror of that name, celebrated in Egypt under the name of Osiris, and in Greece by that of Dionysius. Our concern at present is with the elder of these heroes. Parasu-Rama was the son of a most illustrious and holy Brahmin, of the name of JAMADAGNI, who, though allied to the blood royal of India, had adopted the garb and manners of an anchorite, and devoted his time to prayer and austerities in the solitude of a cell on Mount Heemachel, or Imaus, where he day and night fervently worshipped the Deity. His wife, whose name, according to the Ayeen Akbery, was RUNEEKA, had retired with him; and the reason of their thus secluding themselves from human society was, that Veeshnu, propitiated by the mortifications they endured, might grant them the desire of their hearts, a boon without which a married Hindoo is ever miserable, OFFSPRING. One day, when a long series of intense penitentiary severities had unusually purified the mortal frame, and rendered it more proper for intercourse with Deity, Veeshnu appeared to Runeeka in the form of a handsome child, and asked her, what was the object of the unrelenting austerities practised by herself and her husband? She answered, that we may obtain of heaven a child beautiful and amiable as thou art. Your wishes are granted, said Veeshnu; you shall have a son, who, to every bodily perfection, shall unite the noblest virtues of the soul. He shall be the avenger of innocence, and the exterminator of tyrants. Having said this, he disappeared; and in due time the prediction was fulfilled by the birth of Rama. In reward, too, of their exemplary piety, Eendra, the prince of the celestial regions, intrusted to their care the wonderful cow Kam-

deva, which had the property of yielding from her dugs whatsoever the possessor desired. Notwithstanding this enviable attainment, they used their good fortune with moderation, and continued in their cell and in their usual practice of penitentiary duties. In the mean time young Rama increased in years and beauty, and shewed such symptoms of dawning talents and virtues, that his fame reached Mahadeo himself, whose palace is on the summit of Mount Kilass, and the god himself undertook his education.

It happened that a prince of the Ditye tribe, or race of malignant genii, at that time very much oppressed the inhabitants of Hindostan. His name was Deeruj ; he is represented as having a thousand arms, the expressive symbol of gigantic power and cruelty, and he particularly made war against the Reyshees, or holy tribe, whose devotions he interrupted, and whose persons he insulted. This sanguinary despot, on a hunting excursion, happening one day to pass near the cell of Jamadagni, had the curiosity to enter it, and instantly demanded for himself and numerous suit those refreshments which their fatigue required. To his astonishment and that of his attendants, a table was instantly and sumptuously spread, exhibiting the most delicious meats and the richest wines, and that in such abundance, that the appetites of the whole cavalcade were completely satiated. After the entertainment, the hermit presented the monarch and his company with magnificent dresses, and jewels of inestimable beauty and value. The prince was so overwhelmed with surprise at this immense display of wealth in the cell of a secluded hermit, that, conceiving the whole to be the effect of magic, he at first refused to accept the presents, and sternly demanded by what means, from what quarter, he had obtained riches which far exceeded those of the greatest sovereigns, and in what subterraneous recess they were concealed. The holy man answered, that Eendra, the monarch of the upper regions, had, at Mahadeo's desire, and in reward of his austerities, intrusted to his care Kam-deva, the cow of plenty, whose dugs were the inexhaustible mine whence his treasures

proceeded. On receiving this information, the all-grasping tyrant was on fire to possess himself of the wonderful cow, and eagerly pressed the hermit to bestow upon him the mine as well as the treasure. The sage replied, that was impossible; for, it was the property of Eendra, and, without the consent of that deity, Kam-deva could not be removed, nor would any force on earth avail to tear her from the spot. This intelligence filled him with rage, and his avarice became proportionably inflamed. He now determined to seize the sacred cow, and ordered his followers to surround the hut, and bear her away by force. But cows of celestial origin are not to be thus easily captured; for, on a signal from the hermit, Kam-deva magnified herself to three times her usual bulk, and, rushing upon the rajah's troops with irresistible impetuosity, with her horns and hoofs she gored and trampled down the greatest part of them, put the rest to flight, and then, before them all, flew up triumphantly to the heaven of Eendra, her master. The tyrant, enraged at the slaughter and discomfiture of his troops, immediately raised a great army, and marching to the spot whence he had been obliged so disgracefully to retire, and Kam-deva being no longer on earth to defend her keeper, the holy anchorite was cruelly massacred, and his hut razed to the ground. Runeeka, collecting together from the ruins whatever was combustible, piled it in a heap, on which she placed her husband's mangled body; then, ascending it herself, according to the laws of her country, set fire to it, and was with it consumed to ashes. In the mean time Kam-deva, in her journey to the paradise of Eendra, stopped at Kylass, Seeva's metropolis, to inform Parasu-Rama, then about twelve years old, of the base and cruel conduct of Deeruj to his parents, to whose aid he immediately flew, but arrived only time enough to view the smoaking embers of their funeral pile. The tears rushed down his lovely face, and he swore by the waters of the Ganges that he would never rest till he had exterminated the whole race of Kettris, the rajah-tribe of India.

Armed with the invincible energy of an incarnate god, he immediately commenced his career of just vengeance, by seeking and putting to death, with his single arm, the Ditye tyrant, with all the forces that surrounded him. He then marched from province to province, and from city to city, every where exerting the unerring bow, Danook, and devoting the Kettris to that death which the enormity of their crimes merited. In vain they resisted, singly or united; alike unavailing were open force and secret fraud; they were discomfited in every quarter, and thus the avowed end of this, as well as all the other Avatars, was effectually answered, which are declared to be descents of the Deity, at certain stated intervals, for the express purpose of rooting out vice and impiety, especially if exalted on thrones, when more than usually predominant, from the face of the earth. This instructive moral should always be borne in memory while we peruse them; it tends to render them more intelligible to the European reader, and to throw a veil over the mythological absurdities that obscure and disgrace them.

The conclusion of this Avatar states, that the divine Parasu, having fought and vanquished the Kettris in twenty pitched battles, and having utterly extirpated the race of solar rajahs, collected together in one mass their accumulated treasures; he then performed the *great sacrifice*, and, after consecrating a due proportion to the Deity, distributed the remainder in charity. He then restored the empire of the three regions to the Devatas, or good spirits, that is, established a new dynasty of just and wise sovereigns of the Brahmin line, and retired to the Gaut mountains, concerning which this Avatar contains a remarkable fact, often insisted upon by those who contend for the eternal duration of the earth, and the great revolutions effected by the successive changes of water into land and land into water. The romantic story is as follows:

The Brahmins, wishing to assign a very ancient, if not an infinite, date to their empire, assert, that the sea once *washed the foot of the*

Gauts, from which it is now distant above one hundred miles, and have contrived this ingenious fable to sanction their assertions. After having transferred the empire to their particular tribe, Parasu-Rama requested of them a small portion of that empire, in which he might end his days in undisturbed tranquillity; which request, it seems, they thought proper to deny; a circumstance very inconsistent and improbable, but the fable required it; for, it was in consequence of this denial that Parasu retired to the Gauts. Being thus ungratefully treated by those whom he had exalted to wealth and dominion, he applied to Varuna, the god of the ocean, which then *beat against the base of those mountains*, and solicited that deity to withdraw his waves a little from the shore, and leave a vacant space, sufficient for an exiled prince to inhabit; he desired no greater extent of ground than an arrow would fly over. Varuna, ignorant of the real character that conversed with him, and compassionating his situation, granted a request which appeared so moderate; and it was settled, that the following morning, an arrow, directed from the bow of Parasu, should determine the limits of his future dominion. Unfortunately for Parasu, one of those penitentiary saints, whose eyes pervade the disguises of even the gods, by his power, knew and discovered to Varuna that the exiled prince was Veeshnu himself, who, having by three strides defrauded Bali of the sovereignty of the universe, would undoubtedly, by the strenuous vigour of a divine arm, dart the arrow to an extent that would deprive him of all the land over which his waters rolled. Varuna now lamented the precipitate promise he had given, but declared it was irrevocable. It was finally resolved by artifice to counteract power, and the god of death was resorted to in this dreadful emergency. That deity kindly promised his assistance; and, instantly assuming the form of a white ant, an insect peculiar to India, under cover of the night, crept into Veeshnu's apartment, and, while the deity lay sunk in slumber, with his sharp teeth he so nearly gnawed asunder the string of the bow, that it became impossible for the arrow to be hurled to any great distance.

The scheme succeeded; nor could the arm of Veeshnu avail to send it beyond the limits of the tract which forms the present country of Malabar, and which, therefore, the Brahmins affect to say is the gift of Veeshnu in this Avatar. The whole story, however, is so unconnected with it, and so contrary to its general tenor, that we may safely consider it as an artful interpolation, for the purpose of national aggrandizement. It is added, that Parasu, reflecting on the ingratitude of the Brahmins, uttered a dreadful curse against them on this spot, and that none of the Brahmin tribe are to be found to this day inhabiting a coast which they consider as proscribed to their order. The Hindoo legends affirm, that Parasu-Rama is still living on this coast; and the Ayeen Akbery informs us, they shew his habitation on the mountain of Mehinder.*

The sublime epic poem, called the Ramayan, in which the battles of all the three Ramas (for, a third, called Bali-Rama, the elder brother of Creeshna, is often numbered among the Avatars) with their adversaries are minutely described, having not yet been translated from the Sanscreet original, it is not in my power, at present, to enter into more particular detail concerning the adventures of this first who bore the name, nor to compare it with the Dionysiaca of Nonnus. I understand that the indefatigable Mr. Wilford is engaged on the subject; a circumstance which must give real pleasure to all the admirers of Eastern literature, as he possesses both science and genius adequate to the investigation. In this gentleman's Essay on Egypt and the Nile, there is a fragment relating to Parasu-Rama, extracted from the sacred books of India, from which we learn, that he extended his conquests even to Egypt.

" Parasu-Rama, the son of Jamadagni, but supposed, afterwards, to have been a portion of the divine essence in a human form, was enraged at the success of the confederates, (*viz.* the confederate princes, who had come from Egypt to assist the rajahs by whom his father was

* Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 239. Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 29.

murdered,) and circulated a public declaration, that Nared had urged him to extirpate them entirely; assuring him, that the people of Cusha-Dweepa, who dwelt in the hollows of mountains, were carnivorous; and that their king Cravyadadhipeti, or chief ruler of cannibals, had polluted both earth and water, which were two of the eight forms of Isa, with the mangled limbs and blood of the strangers whom he and his abominable subjects had cruelly devoured. After this proclamation, Parasu-Rama invaded Cusha-Dweepa, and attacked the army of Cravyadadhipeti, who stepped from the ranks, and challenged him to single combat. They began with hurling rocks at each other; and Rama was nearly crushed under a mountain, thrown by his adversary; but, having disengaged himself, he darted huge serpents, which enfolded the giant in an inextricable maze, and at length destroyed him. The blood of the monster formed the Lohita-Chanda, and that of his army the Lohitoda, or river with bloody waters. His friend, Caiceya, whom the Greeks call Orontes, renewed the fight, and was also slain. Then came the king of the Cutila-Cesas, and Mahasyama, ruler of the Syama-Muchas, and usually residing in Arvasthan, or Arabia; the former of whom I conceive to be Blemys; and the second Arabus, whom the Greek mythologists also named Orobandas and Oruandes. They fought a long time with valour, but were defeated; and, on their humiliating themselves and imploring forgiveness, were allowed to retire, with the remains of their army, to the banks of the Cali, where they settled; while Parasu-Rama, having terminated the war in Cusha-Dweepa, returned to his own country, where he was destined to meet with adventures yet more extraordinary.

"This legend is told nearly in the same manner by the poet Nonnus, a native of Egypt, who says, that, after the defeat of Lycurgus, the Arabs yielded, and offered sacrifices to Bacchus; a title corrupted from Bhagavat, or *the preserving power*, of which a ray, or portion, had become incarnate in the person of Parasu-Rama. He relates, that 'Blemys, with curled hair, chief of the ruddy, or Erythrean,

Indians, held up a bloodless olive-branch with the supplicating troops, and bowed a servile knee to Dionysos, who had slain his Indian subjects: that the god, beholding him bent to the ground, took him by the hand and raised him, but conveyed him, together with his many-tongued people, far from the dark Erythrean Indians, to the skirt of Arabia; that he dwelt in that happy region, near to the contiguous ocean, and gave a name to the inhabitants of its towns; but that rapid Blemys passed onward to the mouth of the Nile, with seven branches, destined to be cotemporary ruler over the people of Ethiopia; and that the low ground of Etherian Meroë received him as a chief, who should leave his name to the Blemyes born in subsequent ages.'*"

I know not whether some of my readers may not be so insensible to the charms of the Indian historic muse, as to rejoice that the Ramayan has not yet been translated; for, certainly, inflated accounts of the combats of giants hurling rocks and darting huge serpents at one another, and of monsters, whose blood, spouting forth in torrents, is formed into considerable rivers, are not very consistent with the sober and dignified page of history; yet, had the Ramayan been translated, those accounts must have engrossed no inconsiderable portion of this volume. I scarcely know whether I shall be pardoned even for inserting the long life of the Indian god Creeshna, from the Poorauns; but, as Creeshna is the most distinguished of all the Avatars, or rather, say the Brahmins, as Creeshna was the deity himself in human person, while all the other Avatars enjoyed only a portion of the divinity, and as it will be the last insertion of the kind of any length in this History, I hope to stand excused, while I detail a life so replete with prodigies. The early date, however, of these productions should always be considered, and the barbarous times to which they relate: the exaggerated narration and facts are, perhaps, the truest test of their genuineness.

* Dionysiac. b. xvii. ver. 385-397.

There is no particular astronomical allusion in the brief portion of this Avatar, which I have alone been able to present the reader with, though undoubtedly there is in the original Sanscreet volumes. The moral, however, is manifest in every line of the preceding account. It holds out, as do all the Avatars, an awful lesson to vicious princes, but was intended more immediately to display to us the signal punishment of *avarice* and *extortion*, and the just vengeance that ought to follow every infringement of the rules of *hospitality*, especially in those Eastern countries, where, as its rites are more imperiously necessary, so the violation of them is more flagitiously criminal. The account of the extirpation of the Kettri tribe, to make way for the Brahmins to empire, is doubtless founded on some historic fact, the remembrance of which is traditionally preserved in the families of the Brahmin cast, and it in some degree explains the singular phenomenon, that in Hindostan, a country where the laws are represented as immutable, and where the distinction of the casts is, in general, so accurately observed, so many of the most powerful and venerated rajahs are Brahmins by descent.

Thus have we reached the close of the sixth Indian Avatar, in which we find India described as a country possessed by a civilized industrious race, obedient to their princes, and, whatever may have been the conduct of those princes themselves, pious and moral, in a very early age after the deluge. Having now devoted so large a portion to Sanscreet narration, blended as it is with physical and metaphysical chimæras, it is but just, as we have already gone through more than *half of the Avatars*, that we should attend to the ancient accounts, which, from the writers whom we denominate CLASSICAL, have descended down to posterity, relative to the infant state of that empire, and the invasion of it by Dionysius and other conquerors. In these, though there may be nearly as much fable as in the domestic narrative, I shall yet faithfully detail them, and in the order they are reported to have taken place, as I consider myself bound to omit nothing of importance connected with the ancient history of India.

The accounts of the Egyptian irruptions into India, as detailed by classical writers, are particularly proper to be inserted in this place; because they will be immediately succeeded by the life of the great RAMA-CHANDRA, who, we have seen, Sir William Jones considers as the genuine Bacchus of India, and with whom, therefore, the parallel may be more easily made by the reader. Before, however, I quit these most ancient Sanscreet details for classical ground, I am, in some degree, bound to gratify my readers by an additional extract from the Seeva-Pooraun, translated by Mr. Halhed, and relating to the destruction of the tremendous Titanian Ditya, Tarekee, the rebel spirit of the sky; the history of whose penances, and whose despotic acts, subsequent to his exaltation, the reward of those penances, occurred in page 22 preceding. It will afford to European readers a proper specimen of the eccentric style and manner in which the ancient legends of the Hindoos are written, and of the romantic facts which they relate; and, to my Asiatic readers, who are more accustomed to peruse such extraordinary relations, it will be proportionably valuable, as there can be no doubt entertained by them either of the genuineness of the original, or of the fidelity of the learned translator.

From the portion of astronomy contained in it, it should seem that some fatal conjunction or opposition of the planets, perhaps in Taurus, may have formed the basis of the story; since Cartyceya, or Scanda, son of Seeva, nourished by the Pleiades, and the commander of the celestial armies, is no other than the celestial Bull personified; and indeed the splendour of the great star Aldabaran, in that constellation, seems justly to entitle it to the honour of being the leader of the heavenly host. It should be remembered, that the bull is the symbol of Seeva, on which he is constantly pourtrayed in the pagodas, as Veeshnu is upon the eagle Garoori. Cartyceya is therefore drawn riding on a peacock, whose expanded tail with numerous eyes represents the canopy of heaven, studded with stars. It cannot be denied, however, that, in the Indian mythology, Scanda

is often considered as the planet Mars personified ; for, in fact, the Indian deities are the veriest Proteus's that can be conceived ; and, fortunately, either of those characters is perfectly consistent with the part he acts in the subsequent drama. As many detached parts of the narration may be found in Abraham Rogers, it is not impossible but that Milton, who was living when that book was published, enriched his Paradise Lost, especially his sixth book, which describes the battle of the Angels, with images drawn from it, since many of them are strikingly similar.

CHAPTER V.

Containing the Conclusion of the Legend from the SEEVA-POORAUN, *relative to the Tyrant Tarekee, the Ditya; giving an Account of the Procession to the House of Heemachel, for celebrating the Marriage of Seeva and Parvati; the consequent Birth of Scanda, the heavenly Conqueror; the Overthrow, by him, of that Monster and his Three Sons; and the final Destruction of their three Cities, of Gold, Silver, and Iron, by Fire.*

ALL the Devatas and other inhabitants of the celestial regions being collected together at the summons of Bhagavat, to arrange the ceremonials of the marriage of Seeva and Parvati, first came Brahma, mounted on his goose, with the Reyshees at his stirrup; next, Veeshnu, riding on Garoor, his eagle, with the chank, the chakra, the club, and the pedive, in his hands; Eendra also, and Yama, and Cuvera, and Varuna, and the rivers Ganga and Jumna, and the seven seas. The Gandarves also, and Apsaras, and Vasookèe, and other serpents, in obedience to the commands of Shree Mahadeva, all dressed in superb chains and habits of ceremony, were to be seen in order, amidst the crouded and glittering cavalcade.

And now Shree Mahadeva, after the arrival of all the Devatas, and the completion of the preparations for the procession, set out, in the utmost pomp and splendour, from the mountain Kilas. His third eye flamed like the sun, and the crescent on his forehead assumed the form of a radiated diadem; his snakes were exchanged for chains and necklaces of pearl and rubies, his ashes for sandal and perfume, and his elephant's skin for a silken robe; so that none of the Devatas, in brilliance, came near his figure. The bridal attendants now spread wide abroad the carpet of congratulation, and arranged in

order the banquet of bliss. Nature herself assumed the appearance of renovated youth, and the sorrowing universe recalled its long-forgotten happiness. The Gandarves and Apsaras began their melodious songs, and the Genes and Keenners displayed the magic of their various musical instruments. The earth and its inhabitants exulted with tongues of glorification and triumph; fresh moisture invigorated the withered victims of time; a thousand happy and animating conceptions inspired the hearts of the intelligent and enlightened the wisdom of the thoughtful; the kingdom of external forms obtained gladness, the world of intellect acquired brightness. The dwellers upon earth stocked the casket of their ideas with the jewels of delight, and reverend pilgrims exchanged their beads for pearls. The joy of those on earth ascended up to heaven, and the *tree of the bliss* of those in heaven extended its auspicious branches downwards to the earth. The eyes of the Devatas flamed like torches on beholding these scenes of rapture, and the hearts of the just kindled like touchwood on hearing these ravishing symphonies. Thus Shree Mahadeva set off like a garden in full blow, and Paradise was eclipsed by his motion.

On the other side, Heemachel also exerting himself in preparations for the marriage, arranged himself, with all the other mountains and their wives and children, arrayed in chains of ivory and pearl and costly garments, to wait upon Seeva; and Parvati, dressed in all her ornaments, illuminated the bridal chamber. Heemachel, taking leave for the present for the purpose of preparing the Veda, as is customary, bathed, and distributed alms to the poor and religious, and continued waiting Seeva's arrival. Meina also, accompanied by Nared, stood without the threshold of the door, exhibiting, in her appearance, the utmost joy and impatience; often exclaiming, "Oh! how ardently I desire to behold this beauty and loveliness, for which Parvati has practised so many thousand austerities and penances." Bhagavat, who instantly knows the thoughts of all creatures, being fully acquainted with the pride and vanity of her heart, to try her, immediately put on an appearance the most disgusting in nature, and

arrayed himself in the snake's skin and other insignia of the mendicant Yogee penitent. Those also, who were more immediately about his person, and formed his suit, were instantly changed from beings of exquisite beauty to figures of the grossest deformity; while the advanced part of the cavalcade still retained their majestic appearance and splendid decorations.

And now the procession beginning to move forward, first went the Gandarves and Apsaras dancing and singing, and Veeshiva-Vesu, who is their chief, dressed in his chains and robes of ceremony. Meina said, "This, to be sure, is Seeda-Seeva?" Nared answered, "These are some of Mahadeva's musicians and dancers." Next appeared Pekshe and Mereegreeve and the other Yakshas. Meina said, "Perhaps one of these is Seeda-Seeva?" Nared again corrected her mistake. In the same manner came by Dharma-Raja, and Eendra, and the Sun, and Moon, and Nakshatras; Meina taking each of them, in turn, for Seeda-Seeva. Nared answered, "They are but his servants." Meina exclaimed, "Oh! the fate of my daughter! What must the person himself be, of whom these are but the followers!" Afterwards, when Brahma and the Reyshees arrived, Nared again pointed out her error. Next came Shree-Veeshnu, in colour like a black cloud, conspicuous with his four arms, and the peetamber, *i. e.* the yellow robe, which is his peculiar dress, and the bhreegooleta on his breast, and the chank, the chakra, geda, and padma, in each hand, and the mookout and other ornaments all in order; the eight Siddhyes were with him, and he shone radiant in beauty as the star of the morning. Smiling, he advanced, in the plenitude of his power, his eyes beaming like two lotuses, sublimely exalted on Garoor, and attended with all his Devatas. Meina's doubts were now instantly changed into certainty that this was Seeda-Seeva himself. Nared assured her of the contrary. Meina then uttered a thousand extravagant commendations on her daughter, wondering what figure it could be that was superior to this. Then arrived Breegu and the other Reyshees, with their disciples Ganga and Kam-deva, the

milch-cow, who affords whatever each person desires. Out of these she selected Veseeshtoo, employed in the dhyan, or devotion, of Bhagavat, and in reading the Vedas, as the bridegroom of Parvati. Nared, again setting her right, now pointed with his hand, and exclaimed, "Behold there comes his army; regard them with fixed attention, and observe *Himself* in the midst of the crowd." This multitude was composed of Jins and other impure beings, on beholding of whom, no sensation arises but that of terror; some of them with heads and some without, of a black colour; others with mouths upon their bodies; armed with bows, and bearing mooshels, which are their proper weapons, in their hands; frightful in figure, horrid in voice, and sounding instruments of direful harmony. In the centre they beheld Seeda-Seeva himself, mounted on a cow, having five heads and three eyes, his body rubbed with ashes, the hair of his head tied up in knots after the fashion of the Saniassis, with a moon upon his head; in one of his ten hands holding a cup, made of a human skull, in another a begging-dish, in another a bow, in another a chank, and all the others bearing the symbols of penitentiary devotion; an elephant's hide covered his back, and he seemed, as it were, besotted and half asleep. Nared whispered her, "*This* is Seeda-Seeva." The words had scarcely escaped from his mouth when Meina fell senseless to the ground; but, soon after recovering, began to utter a thousand imprecations and abusive terms against Parvati; crying out, "Is this the sort of person you long for? Is this a person to be in love with? A thousand curses be on thee, and a thousand on myself too for this dire calamity." Scarcely had she uttered these rash words, when the deity thought proper again to lay aside his disgusting appearance and penitentiary habits, shining forth in all the gorgeous array of silk and gems; the golden diadem again embraced his temples, and bracelets of the finest pearl again decorated his arms and ankles. The astonished Meina fell prostrate at his feet, Parvati flew with transport into his arms, and the nuptials were immediately celebrated with the utmost pomp and splendor, amidst

P 2

the sound of the most melodious instruments, and the loudest acclamations of the adoring crowd.

The Devatas soon began to grow impatient for their promised, their mighty, deliverer from the giant Tarekee to be born; and, it is added, in the Pooraun, that Seeva, to gratify their impatience, redoubled his caresses of Parvati. Their impatience, however, still increased with the oppressions of Tarekee, and, in the end, they sent *Fire*, who is a mighty Devata, as well to state the hardships they endured, as to animate his exertions. The flaming elementary herald, to avoid appearing terrific, invested itself with the gentle external form of a dove; and, on its arrival at the celestial palace of Seeva, found that Parvati had just been delivered of a gigantic child, which was immediately consigned to the charge of the dove to be nursed. The dove, with all its efforts, could not hold the mighty infant, but let it fall from the sky on the Ganges; the Ganges also, unable to support it, cast it up among the thick reeds on its banks; and thence, presently, a boy, beautiful as the moon and bright as the sun, whose high extraction and origin were visible in his countenance, arose; and to him were assigned the several names of Parvati-Nanda, and Agnee-Bhoo, and Gunga-Pootree, and Seryeman, and Scanda. In the mean time, six rajah's daughters, (the Pleiades,) who happened at that season to come and bathe in the Ganges, each of them, as she came and viewed the boy, named him *her* son. Parvati-Nanda, assuming to himself six mouths, sucked milk from each of their breasts, and, on that account, one of his names is Khane-Matra, *i. e.* having six mothers. Another of his names also is Carticeya, (the bull, on whose shoulders are placed the Pleiades,) and he has many more.* Each of those rajah's daughters, alternately taking him for her own son, became exceedingly delighted. Nared brought the glad tidings to the Devatas, that a son had been born to Seeda-Seeva after this manner. They immediately set off in a body to his palace on the Mount

* He is the same with Comara-Swarni, in Rogers, p. 175.

Kilas, making very great rejoicings, and congratulating Seeda-Seeva; representing that, if he would consent, young Seryeman should become their leader and commander. Bhagavat permitted them to act in that respect as they might think most suitable to their own advantage.—The Devatas, thus assisted by Seryeman, came in warlike array to SHEEVNET, the kingdom of the Ditye Tarekee, and, for ten days together, the lines of the two armies were opposed to each other; the combating warriors, with their mighty efforts and redoubted blows shook the eight quarters of the universe. Innumerable Dityes and Rakshas were levelled with the dust of death by the strokes of the brave, and vanished into air: On the tenth day, by the irresistible assaults of his all-conquering sword, added to the intrepid bravery of the hero, the gale of victory blew on Seryeman; and, by the assistance of Omnipotence, and the flashes of his victorious cimeter, he severed the head of that impure monster Tarekee from his execrable body, and liberated the world from the fiend that had so long tormented it. Most of the Dityes in his train were also sent to the bottomless pit by his friends, and the harvest of existence was cleared of multitudes of Rakshas by the lightning of the sword and the dagger; those who escaped from the cimeter, esteeming defeat itself an advantage, made their submissions. In fine, neither enemy nor Raksha dared to remain a moment longer in that country, from fear of this conquering hero.

The Devatas, in the height of their joy and exultation, bearing Seryeman to Seeda-Seeva, and performing nemeskars without number, addressed him, "O chief of the Devatas! O Mahadeva! O guardian of thy devotees! thou who art Sumeru among mountains, who art the Moon among Nakshatras, and Vaseeshte among Reyshees, and Eendra among Devatas! the three-lettered Mantra is thy awful symbol! For the good of the world, what is it thou dost not contrive? Good and evil have their establishment by thy command; thy form, which is more splendid than a crore of suns, extends beyond the reach of thought and imagination!

What shall we do to perform duly thy worship? and what power have we to perform thy pooja? Verily, what means hath an atom, without head or foot, to open its mouth in praise of the all-illuminating sun? The hardships to which we have been exposed have their remedy, as far as is possible, in thy compassion and goodness; now, therefore, we here offer to perform whatsoever thou shalt command." Seeda-Seeva said, in return, "Whensoever any difficulty shall beset you, think upon me, and it shall be made smooth." The Devatas then, having taken leave of Bhagavat, returned, with the utmost satisfaction, to enjoy themselves in their own habitations.

The three sons of Tarekee the Ditye, the eldest of whom was called Veedhenmalee, the second Tarekakshe, and the youngest Kemalakshe, who had fled for fear of Seryeman, employed themselves in prayers and austerities in honour of Brahma, and tormented their existence with a variety of mortifications, such as no counter-devices could overcome; as, for instance, standing for one hundred years on one foot, they continued absorbed in prayer, and for one hundred years they stood with their arms lifted up to heaven, and for one thousand years they subsisted altogether upon air, and another thousand years they remained in the act of prostration, with their foreheads to the ground. When their devotion had thus exceeded all limits, Brahma, taking compassion on them, informed them, that since, by extraordinary penances, they had acquired his goodwill, the cloud of mercy was fully distended, and the sea of benevolence overflowed its banks, and that whatsoever they should demand was not far from being granted. The Dityes then requested that he would bestow upon them three cities for their abode; with this condition, that they might take their cities with them whithersoever they should choose to go, and that whenever their cities should be nigh together, then, if any victor in the womb of time should rise, of sufficient power to overcome them, he might, with one arrow, destroy them all three and their cities. Brahma returned, "Thus shall it be!" and immediately disappeared. Then he ordered Meye the

Ditye, on whom depended the construction of the houses of the Raksheses, to found three cities; the first of gold, the second of silver, and the third of iron. Meye the Ditye, in conformity to the command of Brahma, constructed the said three cities accordingly; and the government of the golden city was conferred upon Tare-kakshe, that of the silver city on Kemalakshe, and the city of iron on Veedhenmalee, and himself was established protector of the three cities. In each city the chambers of the houses were ornamented with jewels, the height of each house was equal to the mountain Kilas, and their roofs reached up to the highest heavens. Each city was adorned with beauties glorious as the sun, the deceivers of hearts, the exciters of transport! with Ghandarves, and Siddhyes, and Cha-renes, innumerable, and musicians and singers excelling beyond all imagination; with Brahmins, many performing the Agnee-hotra, many reciting the Vedas and Sastras, and devotees in perpetual effusion of prayer. Everywhere were to be seen temples of Seeda-Seeva, and wells, and tanks, and Paradise-trees, and drunken elephants, and chariots, and palankeens, and foot and horse without number in each of the cities; and Dityes, mighty and powerful, learned in the Vedas, and deep in the Smritis; with heroes, broad in the chest and strong in stature; their shoulders like those of the mad bull, eager for battle, and their force of fist such as might tear the famished lion's whelp from his prey. Even Eendra, the Sun, the Moon, and other Devatas, could not find in themselves the means or force to resist them. Some with blue eyes and hyacinthine hair; some gentle, and some violent of speech, and prone to anger; others, again, hump-backed, and others dwarfs; every one of a different com-plexion; but all employed in pooja to Seeda-Seeva and Brahma, and all perfectly orthodox in the doctrine of the Vedas, Sastras, and Pooraums; and their religion was far more fervent than that of any others of the habitable quarters of the world. The imagination has not beholden, even in a dream, ought in heaven or on earth that could equal the beauty and delightfulness of these cities. In short, the three sons of

Tarekee ruled in them respectively, and became so powerful and mighty, that all the Devatas were reduced to excess of difficulty from their tyranny and oppression; so that, out of terror and apprehension, their aggrieved spirits left their bodies empty, and, addressing themselves to Veeshnu, poured forth the exclamations of distress. Veeshnu heard them with compassion, and promised them speedy and effectual redress.

OF THE CREATION OF MOONDEE, THE FALSE PROPHET, BY VEESHNU, FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBVERTING THE RELIGION OF TREEPOOR, OR THE THREE CITIES.

After dismissing the suppliant Devatas, Veeshnu produced from himself, for the purpose of subverting the orthodox religion of Treepoor, a certain person, whose hair was close cut, with clothes all filthy, after the manner of a dervise's garb; upon his back a copper pot, and a linen chawry in his hand, and his mouth bound up with a white cloth. Him Veeshnu named Moondee; and this Moondee, immediately performing nemeskar to Veeshnu, stood up, and said, "O lord of worship, what is thy command, and for what purpose was I created?" Veeshnu answered, "Attend and hear that purpose! Whereas I have given thee existence immediately from myself, thou must be prompt and firm in the execution of my design; in reward of which thou shalt be eternally worshipped, and obtain exaltation. I have fabricated, by my own maya, (the word properly means *illusion,)* sixteen thousand slocas (texts of Scripture) entirely false, unworthy of belief from one end to the other, and contrary to the Vedas and Smreetee. These thou must commit to memory, that thy mind may be consistent in them, and whomsoever thou shalt draw to thee, the same shall be converted to thee with all his heart and soul; moreover, if thou shouldst have an inclination to compose other books, thou shalt be enabled to do it. Make thyself, there-

fore, master of these, and get thee to Treepoor, and instruct the inhabitants there in thy new doctrine, that their orthodoxy may be overturned and this may be the cause of their destruction. After that, thou shalt go to Meroosthelle, and there, by my command, disseminate thy doctrine, in all which no crime whatever shall be imputed to thee, and thou shalt at length be reunited to me." Moondee, bowing with a look of obedience to the command, promised to perform it. After that, he formed four other disciples after his own figure, and taught them his own lying sastra. They also performed nemeskar to Veeshnu, and prostrated themselves before him.

Shortly after, Moondee, with his disciples, arrived at the city of Treepoor, and instructed the inhabitants thereof in the new doctrine. Whosoever communed with them took lessons in their science, and almost in the instant performed their worship with entire attachment, and fell utterly into their delusive snare. Nared, also, after a time, by the command of Veeshnu, arriving in that city, gave up his soul to their pupilage, and applied closely to their doctrine, that the inhabitants might be fully satisfied, since Nared, a truly-enlightened doctor, submitted to their instructions. In fine, the three cities were entirely and completely filled with this baseless doctrine, and there remained no vestige of goodness, of the Vedas, or of the sastras.

OF THE DESTRUCTION OF TREEPOOR.

Such being the situation of those devoted cities, and their destiny being arrived, Veeshvacarma, in obedience to the urgent command of Seeva, the avenging deity, now put in order all the brilliant articles belonging to his war-chariot, which itself shone like gold. The arrangement of the furniture belonging to his war-chariot was as follows: in the place of the right wheel blazed the sun, in the place of the left was the moon; instead of the brazen nails and bolts,

which firmly held the ponderous wheels, were distributed Brahmins on the right hand and Reyshees on the left; in lieu of the canopy on the top of the chariot was overspread the vault of heaven; the counterpoise of the wheels was on the east and west, and the four semordres were instead of the cushions and bolsters; the four Vedas were placed as the horses of the chariot, and Saraswaty was for the bell; the piece of wood by which the horses are driven was the three-lettered Mantra, while Brahma himself was the charioteer, and the Nacshatras and stars were distributed about it by way of ornaments. Sumeru was in the place of a bow, the serpent Seschanaga was stationed as the string, Veeshnu instead of an arrow, and fire was constituted its point. Ganges and other rivers were appointed to the office of præcursors; and the setting out of the chariot, with its appendages and furniture, one would affirm to be the year of twelve months gracefully moving forwards.

When Shree Mahadeva, with his numerous troops and prodigious army, was mounted, Brahma drove so furiously, that thought itself, which, in its rapid career, compasses heaven and earth, could not keep pace with it. By the motion of the chariot heaven and earth were put into a tremor, and, as the earth was not able to bear up under this burthen, the cow of the earth, or Kam-deva, took upon itself to support the weight. Seeva went with intention to destroy Treepoor, and the multitude of Devatas, and Reyshees, and Apsaras, who waited on his stirrup, opening their mouths in transports of joy and praise, exclaimed, "Jaye! Jaye!" so that Parvati, not being able to bear his absence, set out to accompany Seeva, and, in an instant, was up with him; while the light, which brightened on his countenance on the arrival of Parvati, surpassed all imagination and description. The genii of the eight regions, armed with all kinds of weapons, but particularly with agnyastra, or fire-darts, like moving mountains, advanced in front of the army; and Eendra, and other Devatas, some of them mounted on elephants, some on horses, others on chariots, or on camels, or buffaloes, were stationed on each side;

while all the other orders of Devatas, to the amount of some lacs, formed the centre. The Munietuvaras, with long hair on their heads like Saniassis, holding their staves in their hands, danced as they went along; the Siddhyes, who revolve about the heavens, opening their mouths in praise of Seeva, rained flowers upon his head; and the vaulted heaven, which is like an inverted goblet, being appointed in the place of a drum, exalted his dignity by its majestic resoundings.

The historian here relates, that, if Bhagavat should choose, he could, in one moment, with one glance of his eye, annihilate the universe, and hath no occasion for destructive instruments and warlike preparations; but the equipment of his chariot for his conveyance, his taking with him the Devatas and others, and his preparing the unconquerable bow and arrow, with the arrangement of the army, and ceremony of the triumphal procession, all this circumstance and pride of war are not displayed without a proper motive, viz. that his enemies may know *his* power and feel *their own*; that he may get himself renown, and that both high and low may be convinced of this truth, " that I, Seeva, am master of all, and that all the inferior deities, &c. conceive themselves honoured by obedience to me, since I have composed my chariot of all the Devatas."

When Seeva advanced his august march nearer to Treepoor, the three Dityes before-mentioned met him with a mighty army. The Devatas, with conscious satisfaction, exultingly cried out " Jaye! Jaye!" Brahma, also, and Veeshnu, exclaiming " Jaye! Jaye!" represented that the present auspicious moment was to be taken advantage of, and the inhabitants of Treepoor dispatched at once to the lowest pit. Seda-Seeva grasping his weapon pashoopete, with an arrow, fitted it to the bow-string, and watched his opportunity when all the three Treepoor should be arranged in a line, that he might finish their work with one arrow. When, therefore, they were once formed altogether in that line, Seeda-Seeva let loose his arrow, like death, and transfixed them all in the twinkling of an eye. In

fine, immense multitudes of Dityes were burnt with fire, and innumerable Rakshas were put to death; and such of the inhabitants of Treepoor as had employed themselves in pooja to Seeda-Seeva, and had remained firm in their faith, were preserved in health and safety from that calamity, were enlisted in the roll of his servants, and received under his protection. The Devatas performed nemeskar to him for some crores of Dityes who were burnt, and were also anxious to present addresses for their own salvation while his anger thus furiously burned. Seeda-Seeva and Parvati, out of their manifold love and kindness, fastened the seal of silence upon their tongues, but they broke out every moment into praise and thanksgiving; exclaiming, "O chief of created beings and Devatas! O lord of paradise, from whom nothing is hidden! O Seeda-Seeva! O Maharajah! O thou that art the type of all good! O thou that art without quality! O thou that yet art the possessor of all qualities! O thou that art the destroyer of Treepoor and of all the Rakshas! the protector of the distressed and unfriended! since thy majestic Roop is the three-lettered Mantra, O quickly afford security to thy devotees, and in mercy ordain that faith in thee may ever be firmly rooted in our hearts, and that we may be blessed and exalted with thy favour!" Seeda-Seeva, out of his mercy, graciously replied, "Whatever is your request, speak, and it is granted." The Devatas humbly answered, "We pray that, whenever we are put to streights by the Dityes, thou wouldst be our preserver." Seeda-Seeva returned, "Thus it shall be, and I will ever be compassionate to your situation." On this the Devatas, having respectfully taken leave of Seeda-Seeva, departed to their own habitations amidst shouts of joy and songs of triumph. He who shall read this adhyaye (chapter) with purity of heart will attain to all his wishes.*

* Manuscript of Halhed.

CLASSICAL HISTORY

OF THE

ANCIENT INVASIONS

OF

INDIA.

HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.

BOOK III.

DETAILING THE HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF INDIA DURING THE EARLIEST PERIODS, AS RECORDED IN CLASSICAL WRITERS.

CHAPTER I.

Containing the History of the Invasion of India by OSIRIS, *King of Egypt, according to the Greek Writers; by them more generally denominated* DIONYSIUS, *or* BACCHUS.

AS Egypt may justly contend for the palm of superior antiquity to every kingdom out of Asia, and, indeed, from the Sanscreet writers, whose accounts we have been reviewing, seems to have been anciently considered as a part of Asia itself, our eye, during this survey of the transactions of foreign nations with India, is naturally first directed thither.

In the preceding book we have seen that one of the numerous, and, indeed, one of the most ancient, of the Sanscreet appellations of Egypt was Misra-Sthan; that name by which it is constantly mentioned in Scripture from having being first peopled by Misraim, the son of Ham. The name is, in fact, preserved to this day in the capital of the empire, for Misra is the domestic appellation for Cairo.

It is possible that MENES, the name of the first regular acknowledged sovereign of mortal race who reigned in that country, may be only a variation of that of the great legislator of India, the father and sovereign of the renovated earth, Menu, or Satyaurata. It is also possible that a veneration for so respected a name might lead them to retain it long as the title of their sovereigns, in the same manner as there are reckoned fourteen MENUS in India, all referring to, and centring in, Satyaurata. The mode after which Diodorus Siculus writes the name, MNEEVES, adding that his symbol was the *bull Apis*,* strongly inclines us to believe the identity of these personages. But Menes and Osiris, both of whose names signify the sun, are, by the period in which each is said to have flourished, proved to be the same person, and that period is fixed to be about the 2220th year before Christ, the very period which we have assigned for the commencement of the Indian empire under Belus. Osiris is said to have laid the foundation of his capital of Thebes 2215 years before Christ; he is recorded to have reclaimed the Egyptians from that state of barbarity and ignorance, that cannibal ferocity, in which the Poorauns, cited before, describe them to have been immersed; to have taught them to cultivate that land of mud where the *great serpent* reigned, (an emblem of the chaotic state of Lower Egypt, since animals of that class are gendered amidst accumulated slime and filth,) to drain the marshes, to sow various kinds of grain, to plant vineyards, and to have promoted among them the worship of the gods, and the pursuit of those arts that sweeten and meliorate man's condition.

Such was the character of Osiris, and hence the Greeks, affixing to the name certain determinate ideas of superior dignity and worth, have unanimously conferred on him the honour of having been the original Dionysius, or Bacchus, of Egypt; but how far they are justified in dertermining that the same renowned sovereign was the

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. p. 42.

Bacchus of India is also a point that will remain for discussion after we have recapitulated from those writers the exploits, whether real or imaginary, asserted to have been performed by him in that country. We shall first, however, summarily state a few general observations concerning this ancient Bacchus himself, whose name has been thus undistinguishingly conferred on sovereigns, eminent for dispensing wise laws and performing beneficent and brilliant acts, and whom all the classical writers of antiquity have, with one consent, joined in asserting to have been the first conqueror, and not merely the conqueror, but the reformer and legislator, of India.

In truth, deeply as the history of this personage is involved in the fables of mythology, various as are the characters which Bacchus is said to have sustained, and multifold as are the allegorical forms under which he is represented; yet it is highly probable, that some illustrious character, (whether Egyptian, Assyrian, or Indian, whether we denominate him Osiris, Sesostris, or Rama, whether we derive the word itself, with Jones, from BAGIS, a Sanscreet title of Seeva,* the generative god of India, whence Bhagavat, or, with Bochart, from BAR-CHUS,†) eminently endowed with the important qualifications ascribed to Bacchus in the earliest ages, actually did exist, not only a great hero in war, but a powerful patron and zealous promoter, in peace, of the liberal and useful arts. He seems to have been known and adored, under one or other of his numerous titles, in every region of the earth: some of those titles are enumerated in the subsequent ancient epigram:

Ogygia me BACCHUM vocat,
OSIRIN Ægyptus putat,
Mysi PHANACEM nominant,
DIONYSON Indi existimant,
Romana sacra LIBERUM,
Arabica gens ADONEUM,
Lucaniacus PANTHEUM.

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 250.

† Bochart's Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 2, p. 13.

Conjecture has wearied itself to discover who, among the primitive race of mankind, this person really was; and, while some authors have derived him from Egypt and others from Greece, there are those, who, with no small portion of probability on their side, refer us to the Sacred Writings themselves for the true developement of his history, in the character of Noah, the prototype of all beneficence after the deluge. There is a passage in Arrian which has been often quoted as decisive of the contest. We are informed by that writer,* that, when Alexander approached towards Nysa, an ancient and celebrated city, in about the thirty-second degree of north latitude, on the western frontiers of India, with intention to reduce it, he was waited upon with a deputation from the principal citizens, who implored his protection for its inhabitants, and that he would leave them in the free possession of those laws and that liberty which they had immemorially enjoyed. They trusted that he would grant them this indulgence from his reverence to the memory of Dionysius, (they must therefore have meant the Grecian deity of that name,) who, after his conquest of India, and on his retreat from it, erected that city as a monument of his triumphs, and as an asylum for those veterans in his army who were worn out in his service and unable to return with him; that he called the surrounding territory Nysea, and the city itself Nysa, in memory of his nurse of that name. The deputies from Nysa farther informed him, that, to the neighbouring mountain, which hung over the city, Dionysius had given the appellation of *Meros*, from the circumstance of his having been cherished in the thigh of Jupiter; and that, of the sincerity of this their declaration, one demonstrable evidence remained, that the ivy, sacred to Bacchus, which grew no where else in India, flourished in a peculiar manner, the boast and ornament of Nysa.

It is possible, that this story might have been artfully fabricated by the citizens of Nysa, without having any real foundation, on purpose

* Arrian, lib. v. p. 196, edit Gronovii.

to screen themselves from danger and flatter the pride of Alexander; and, as I have, upon that supposition, purposely neglected to insert this address at length in my historical account of the Macedonian invasion, I should not have admitted it in this place but for the following very curious information to be found in the Asiatic Researches. "I had almost forgotten," says the president, "to remark, that *Meros* is said by the Greeks to have been a mountain of India, on which their Dionysius was born; and that *Meru*, though it generally means the north pole in the Indian geography, is also a mountain near the city of NAISHADA, or NYSA, called by the Grecian geographers Dionysopolis, and universally celebrated in the Sanscreet poems; though the birth-place of Rama (who seems to have better pretensions to be considered as the real Bacchus of India) is supposed to have been Ayodhya, or Audh."*

The vanity of the Egyptians and Greeks, in transforming to their own deified heroes whatever they had learned by tradition, or heard from report, concerning the illustrious exploits, in war or peace, of eminent men in the neighbouring kingdoms, is the fruitful source of nearly all the difficulties that attend the investigation of ancient characters, celebrated in the page of history. That a very strict intercourse, commencing even in the earliest post-diluvian æras, existed between the Indians and Egyptians, has been indisputably proved; and, as the Egyptians multiplied their theological fables by ingrafting upon them those of the Indians, so there is ample evidence to demonstrate, that the greatest part, if not the whole, of the Grecian deities derived their origin from Egypt. To such a height, indeed, had their fondness for Egyptian ceremonies and customs arisen at Athens, that one of their most celebrated comedians upbraided the Athenians, that their city was no longer Athens, but Egypt.

Without entering, at present, into any minute discussions, whether the Indian and Egyptian, and, consequently, the Grecian,

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 259.

Bacchus were really the same person, a circumstance, however, extremely probable from the foregoing and a variety of other collateral evidence which will be hereafter adduced, it is my province to record, in this place, the particulars that have descended down to us from the ancient writers, whom we distinguish by the name of classical, relative to this first memorable invasion of India by Osiris, under the more general name of Dionysius, or Bacchus; an invasion, which has, through successive ages, been equally the theme of the enraptured poet and the grave, but credulous, historian. It is from Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo, who were all three in Egypt, and derived their information from the priests of the country, as well as from Plutarch, who, however, it should be added, explains away the whole in an allegory, that the following general account of this extraordinary person and this memorable event is principally extracted. Osiris, whom, as before observed, all the writers of antiquity consider as the original Dionysius, and a real character, notwithstanding the suspicion that arises from a title signifying THE SUN, this Osiris, acknowledged to have flourished in periods long before Greece emerged from barbarity, is recorded to have been the son of Saturn, TIME, and Rhea, the EARTH; while Nonnus, in his Dionysiacs, relates that he was nursed by THE HOURS: all which is evidently an allegorical genealogy; and, when intended to be applied to a human being, can only be true of the first post-diluvian mortal. The story of his being nourished in the *meros*, or *thigh*, of Jupiter, and educated at Nysa,[c] in Arabia, properly belongs to the Grecian Bacchus, and, we shall presently see, was founded on their misconception of a Hindoo legend, and their mistaking that mountain for Nysa, in India. — When arrived at an age to take upon himself the cares of empire, he became at once the first and greatest monarch of Egypt; and, after having reclaimed his own subjects from the state of ignorance and barbarity in which they were immersed; after having taught them the method of cultivating the ground, and diffused among them the blessings of the harvest and the vintage; after

having collected them into cities, made them acquainted with the arts of social life, and enforced upon them the worship of the gods, to whose honour he erected many magnificent temples: after all these beneficent acts at home, this father and sovereign of his people, this munificent friend of the human race, left his recently-erected capital of Thebes, and the nation he had thus reformed, to extend his empire over the other kingdoms of the east, and confer on foreign nations the inestimable benefits he had bestowed upon the Egyptians. He was accompanied in this expedition not only by heroes of high military fame, as Anubis and Macedo, his mail-clad sons, but by men renowned in the paths of inventive science, as Apollo and Pan; by Triptolemus, skilled in husbandry, and Maro, the planter of vines. Nor was he destitute of those who were skilled in the dance and the song; for, the nine Muses* are said constantly to have attended him in his progress, and the wanton fawns and the jocund satyrs sported in his train.

To a conqueror, approaching with such benevolent intentions, attended with such powerful, as well as agreeable, associates, with force to compel, with music to soothe, and with oracles of wisdom and science to instruct, what nation could long refuse submission? Having passed through Æthiopia and Arabia, which he is said to have subjected and improved by a variety of useful institutions and stupendous works in architecture; particularly, in the former kingdom, having raised vast dykes to confine the Nile, whose overflowings had desolated the country, within its proper bed; Osiris hastened to that nobler theatre of his glory, the Indian empire. According to the above-mentioned authors, he found the Indians wandering among their mountains and plains in the simplicity of pastoral life and the innocence of primæval man; unacquainted with the principles of agriculture, and strangers, if not to the use of arms, to the principles of regulated war. The forces of Dionysius entered India, from

* In many of the ancient relievos, Bacchus is drawn attended by the whole choir of the Muses; and, in honour of him, the name of Nysa was given to one of the two summits of Parnassus.

the Persian frontier, in a magnificent procession; and all the pomp and splendour becoming the monarch of a great and civilized empire were displayed upon this occasion. He did not, however, enter it entirely unopposed, however ineffectually, by the jealous inhabitants. An immense multitude, armed with such weapons of defence as either accident supplied or infant science could fabricate, tumultuously flocked together from all the distant districts of India to oppose the progress of the invading army; nor could the benefits, likely to be obtained by emancipation from barbarity, in their opinion, atone for the irreparable loss of their liberties.

Already exalted into a divinity by the prostrate adoration of those who beheld the wonderful effects of power, united with clemency and wisdom, soothed by the flattering appellation of deity, and convinced perhaps of the necessity of continuing the delusion for the more rapid advancement of his projects, Dionysius retained among the attendants of his court a certain number of female devotees, who acted as priestesses to the new-made god, and who, by their frantic outcries and extravagant gesticulations, exhibited the appearance of divine inspiration. These, under the impulse of a holy phrensy, rushed furiously up and down the mountains, and made the forests resound with reiterated acclamations of "Io Bacche, Io Triumphe!" Each of these, as well as the soldiers of his army, were furnished with a *thirsus*, that is, a kind of lance or spear wrapped up in vine-leaves, to amuse the unpractised Indians, and induce them to believe that no hostilities were intended. When, therefore, the rude, but innumerable, host, assembled to defend all that was dear to them, prepared for the assault, and had arranged their elephants in order of battle, these furious Bacchæ, considerably increased in their numbers by others who joined with them in that disguise, and who affected the same terrific appearance, flew in a transport of wild enthusiasm among the affrighted Indians; and, brandishing on high their thirsi, and loudly smiting the sacred cymbals of their god, spread dismay and havoc wherever they came. Their horrid shrieks

and hideous yellings at the same time so terrified the elephants, that they fled in haste and confusion from the field, leaving the Indians, who had placed upon those elephants their principal dependance, in consternation not to be conceived. A vigorous attack upon their broken ranks from the disciplined legions of Dionysius soon ended the unequal contest, and left him in possession of the glory of being the first foreign victor on the plains of India.

We have no particulars of the route through India which the conqueror pursued; but, as we are informed he stayed three years in the country, (from which circumstance the feast of Bacchus continued among the Thebans during the space of three days,) subjugating it by his arms and improving it by his wisdom, it may reasonably be supposed that his authority was absolute, and his dominion extensive, if not universal. In all the countries which Osiris subdued, he is said to have left monuments of his triumphs, and to have erected pillars descriptive of his victories, even at the sources of the Ganges, which some of his historians assert him to have reached, while others of them insist, that he pushed on his conquests quite to the eastern extremities of Asia, and was only stopped in his career by the bounding ocean.

Such is the substance of the varying accounts of this irruption by foreign historians; let us now attend to the opinion which, according to Diodorus Siculus, the Indians themselves entertained of this extraordinary character.* They acknowledged, indeed, he tells us, *a Bacchus*, to whose skill in legislation, in agriculture, and in planting vineyards and the larger species of Indian fig-trees, they were much indebted; that he was a great conqueror, that he erected many noble cities, and instituted sacred rites in honour of the gods; but, at the same time, they insisted that he was no foreigner, but a native of India. Diodorus, however, or his informers, must have mistaken when they represented this Indian Bacchus as having

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. iii. cap. 4.

taught the culture of the vine, however he might have encouraged the growth of the ivy at Nysa; for, it is a notorious fact, equally the result of ancient and modern observation, that no vineyards were ever generally cultivated in India before the time of Akber; and, in fact, we can have little to do with Bacchus, as god of wine, where the Brahmins are positively forbidden to taste fermented liquors. A few wild grapes, we are told by Strabo,* grew in the country of the Musicani, totally unfit for use, and never improved by culture; but those are the only grapes on record that ancient India ever produced, though they certainly were no strangers to a kind of mead, made from the expressed juice of the sugar-cane; nor to a liquor extracted from rice, which they drank at their sacrifices. In more recent times, Hamilton mentions a similar extract, which, he says, they called *bang*. The truth is, that the Greeks, who chose to call this Indian hero by the name of their own god Dionysos, were willing likewise to invest him with all the attributes by which he was distinguished in their own country.

It must not be omitted, that the Indians related farther of *their* Bacchus, that, so far from residing only three years in their country, he reigned over all India (if Arrian, as cited above, truly states their relations to the officers of the army of Alexander) during the extended period of fifty-two years, and died in a very advanced age, leaving a numerous family of children, who continued for many generations to sway the imperial sceptre. After having been absent from his Egyptian territories three years, the victorious monarch directed his course towards Greece, crossed the Hellespont, and, landing in Thrace, added new glory to the Egyptian arms, by the conquest and death of Lycurgus, its king, who opposed his progress. To Maro he gave in charge to cultivate that as yet uncivilized region, bestowed upon his son Macedo the kingdom which, from him, was afterwards called Macedon, and left Triptolemus in possession of

* Strabo, lib. xv.

Attica. At length, he led back his troops to their native country, and entered Thebes in triumph, laden with all the choicest productions and various wealth of the different countries which he had reclaimed and subjugated.

These discordant accounts seem to prove the existence of two heroes of the name, or at least character, of Dionysius, the one a native, the other a foreigner; and, in truth, the Indian annals, as will be seen hereafter, record the events of an Egyptian sovereign, denominated Deva-Nahusha, whence Dionysius was doubtless formed, and his feats have probably been confounded with those of that Rama, who we are about to prove was the true Indian Bacchus, after having first finished the narration of what is to be found in the classics concerning this invasion and the memorials of it. We have it on the authority of Plutarch, in his treatise of Isis and Osiris, that, in honour of Osiris, and principally with a view to commemorate his famed expedition into India, those games were established which, in Egypt, were called Pamylia, in Greece, Dionysia, and, in Rome, Bacchanalia; and he asserts the Egyptian Isis and Osiris (without doubt the Isa and Eswara of India) to be the Grecian Ceres and Bacchus.* The kings of the Oxydracæ, who inhabited the north-western parts of India, in which the irruption commenced, are also said by Curtius† to have imitated, even till the period of the invasion of Alexander, in their military excursions, the order of march observed by that conqueror on his entrance into India; while their priests continued to celebrate the orgies of Bacchus, which they professed to the Macedonians to have learned from himself when in their territories. Curtius is a writer upon whom so little dependence is to be placed, that, unless his account admit of confirmation from the testimony of others, no great stress can be laid upon the assertions of so credulous and flowery an historian. Sir Thomas Herbert, however, a traveller possessed of great learning and fidelity, confirms this state-

* Plutarch de Iside et Osiride.

† Quintus Curtius, lib. ix. cap. 4.

ment, as to those regions of the peninsula which he visited; and, after affirming, that he saw in many pagodas images exactly resembling those of Priapus and Pan, as described by Servius, adds that the feasts of Bacchus are still celebrated in those parts; for, that they cover themselves with skins, adorn their heads and tresses with ivy, in one hand holding a javelin, and in the other cymbals of brass and timbrels; attended by youth of both sexes, who ramble like so many distracted people up and down, and rend the air with their continued clamours.* Whatever opinion we may entertain of Mr. Hollwell's mode of interpreting the mythology of India, in many instances doubtless erroneous, from the small advances made in his time by Europeans in the knowledge of Sanscreet and in the mysteries of the Brahmins, yet his veracity, when he relates what he personally beheld in India, cannot reasonably be doubted; and he confidently affirms, that rites, very similar, if not exactly the same, with those celebrated in the ancient feasts of Bacchus, are even at this day exhibited as well in the mountainous regions as in the peninsula of India.† On his return from India, he favoured the public with a very particular account, accompanied with engravings, of some of the festive representations in honour of the Hindoo deities, at which he was present in Bengal; and, according to him, the mystic dance, the exulting chorus, and the drums and cymbals, are still in use. In the dramatic entertainment, exhibited at one of their feasts called the Ram-Jattra, or *dance of Ram*, whose resemblance to Bacchus we have before intimated, that great idol is represented on his plate invested with the crown of victory, as the protector of empires, states, and property, encircled with a serpent, the emblem of immortality, and riding upon a monkey, the known emblem, *he observes*, throughout Hindostan, of craft, policy, and stratagem: but we shall presently see that is by no means the reason why Ram is thus pourtrayed: in his left hand he holds a bow, and is represented

* Hollwell's India Tracts, part ii. chap. vii.

† Harris's Voyages, vol. i. p. 457.

in the attitude of having just discharged an arrow from it. Mr. Hollwell has accompanied his engraving with a short historical account of Ram's exploits in India, as related to him by the Brahmins then present, which, having better authorities, we have no occasion to copy, but he very justly adds, " Under these, the ancient history of Hindostan and its rajahs is obscurely couched." In this groupe are united with Ram, Lacksmi, the goddess of grain, crowned with ears of corn, and encircled by a plant bearing fruit; Seeva, sitting on a white bull, an animal peculiarly sacred to Osiris, environed also with a serpent, holding in one hand a dumboor, or small drum, and in the other a singee, or musical horn, instruments in use at all their festivals; and Saraswaty, the Gentoo goddess of arts, letters, and eloquence.

There is no occasion for our prolonging these accounts from inferior sources of information, when we can at once ascend to the fountain-head of intelligence. I shall, therefore, without farther delay, add the substance of what Sir William Jones has related concerning the history of RAM, as the prototype of Bacchus, from those genuine records in the original Sanscreet to which he has had access.

He commences the important information, for which the public are so much indebted to him concerning this long-debated subject, *who* the Indian Bacchus actually was, by observing, that on the celebrated topic of Rama and his atchievements both in Egypt and India, the Hindoos have a great number of beautiful compositions, historical and dramatical, at least two thousand years old; that there is, in particular, an epic poem on the same subject, written by Valmic, their most ancient poet, called the RAMAYAN, which, in unity of action, magnificence of imagery, and elegance of style, far surpasses the learned and elaborate work of Nonnus; with which, he is of opinion, if an accurate comparison were made, there could hardly a doubt arise that Dionysos and Rama were the same person; and he inclines to think that he was Rama, the son of Cush, who

might have established the first regular government in this part of Asia.

After informing us, that Ram (that is, the second who bore that distinguished name, and whose more extended history will shortly be detailed) is an incarnate deity of the first rank in the Indian system of mythology, or, in other words, that he is an appearance upon earth of the preserving power; he adds, that it is his belief, that this incarnate deity was the Dionysius of the Greeks, whom they termed Eleutherias, *the deliverer*, and Dithyrambus, *the triumphant*; and that he was the same person whom the Romans, adopting the Grecian titles, called Liber and Triumphus, &c. &c. because both nations had records or traditionary accounts of his giving laws to men and deciding their contests, of his improving navigation and commerce, and, what may appear still more observable, of his conquering India and other countries with an army of *satyrs*. He adds, that, in fact, Ram, or Rama, was the sovereign of Ayodhya, or Auhh, a city in the most ancient times of wonderful extent and magnificence, as may be inferred from the present Lucnow's having been, according to the Brahmin accounts, only a lodge for one of its gates; that he is celebrated as a conqueror of the highest renown, and the deliverer of nations from tyrants, as well of his consort Sita, from the giant Ravan, king of Lanca; that he was commander-in-chief of a numerous and intrepid race of those large monkeys, which some of our naturalists have denominated Indian satyrs; that the name of his general was Hanumat, the prince of satyrs; and that, by the wonderful activity of such an army, a bridge of rocks was raised over the sea, a part of which the Hindoos suppose still to remain; and he thinks it is probably that series of rocks, which, by Mussulmen and Portugueze, is mistakenly called Adam's, for it should be Rama's, bridge. "Might not," subjoins Sir William, "this army of satyrs have been only a race of mountaineers, whom Rama, if such a monarch ever existed, had civilized. We must not omit, that the father of Hanumat was the god of wind, named

PAVAN, one of the eight genii; and, as Pan improved the pipe by adding six reeds, and played exquisitely on the cithern a few moments after his birth, so one of the four systems of Indian music bears the name of Hanumat, or Hanuman, in the nominative, as its inventor, and is now in general estimation."*

These remarks of Sir William Jones concerning the identity of Bacchus and Rama are much strengthened by the very singular fact, that, as there were two incarnate Ramas, Parasu and Ramachandra, so Osiris is asserted by ancient mythologists to have been twice born, whence he was denominated *διφυης*. In fact, however, there were three Ramas; the last being the elder brother of Creeshna, and sometimes numbered among the Avatars; yet even here does not the parallel fail; for, in the hymns attributed to Orpheus, he is called *τριγονος*, or thrice-born *πρωτογονον, διφυη, τριγονον*.†

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i

† Orphic Hymns, v. 29.

CHAPTER II.

Continuing the Investigation of the Subject discussed in the preceding Chapter, with Strictures on the History of ancient Egypt, as connected with India, in which the classical are compared with the Hindoo Historians.

AS I conceive the history of Egypt in these early periods to be closely connected with that of India, and as Mr. Wilford has investigated at far greater length than Sir William Jones the history of Osiris and its first monarchs, I think myself obligated, notwithstanding the evident mixture of allegory with the events of almost every reign, occasionally to notice them as I proceed, since they not only mutually illustrate the history of each country, but throw light on the general history of mankind in their infant state.

The result of the inquiry, instituted in the chapter preceding, concerning that celebrated, but obscure, character in antiquity, denominated Osiris, if in fact he were not Noah himself, seems to be, that the Egyptian priests, from whom Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo, obtained their information concerning him, have ingrafted upon the history of the actions of that prince (whether true or fabulous) that of more than one of the Ramas of India; the first of whom, Parasu Rama, we have seen, in the account of his Avatar, is by the Sanscreet historians recorded to have combated with and crushed the SANCHALAS, or savage cannibal race of Upper Egypt, who lived in shells, or the hollows of rocks formed by the accumulation of shells, exactly after the manner in which the Troglodytes of the Grecian geographers are said to have lived. These latter were, doubtless, the first rude inhabitants of Egypt, to whom the exact re-

verse of the story is more truly applicable, since they were the ferocious people whom our INDIAN OSIRIS first civilized, restrained from rapine and blood by the just severity of salutary laws, and taught to reside in habitations, better calculated to be the abode of human beings than the gloomy caverns and frightful precipices of the mountains of the Thebais. The idea of these gigantic combatants hurling rocks at one another forcibly brings back to our recollection the fable of the Titans warring against the gods; that is, the Dityes warring against the Devatas, the most probable source of that Grecian legend.

Ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam;
Ter PATER extructas disjecit fulmine montes.

The Grecians, indeed, armed with thunder the hand of their Pater Omnipotens; but our omnipotent Rama, the FATHER of the Indian nation, defeated his Titans by darting at them huge serpents, "which enfolded the giants in an inextricable maze, and then destroyed them." The serpents here mentioned may allude to the uncultivated and marshy state of the lower lands of Egypt, which were probably in those early periods little better than a vast stagnant lake, the proper place for serpents and other venomous reptiles to engender in. On that account, doubtless, the great serpent SANCHASURA is said to have dominion in the Lower Egypt; for, according to the Sanscreet books, translated by Mr. Wilford, "On the banks of the Nile, there had been long contests between the Devatas and the Dityes: but, the latter tribe having prevailed, their king and leader SANCHASURA, who resided in the ocean, made frequent incursions into the country, advancing usually in the night, and retiring before day to his submarine palace. Thus he destroyed or made captive many excellent princes, whose territories and people were between two fires; for, while SANCHASURA was ravaging one side of the continent, CRACACHA, king of Crauncha-Dweepa, used to desolate the other; both armies consisting of savages and cannibals,

who, when they met, fought together with brutal ferocity, and thus changed the most fertile of regions into a barren desert." This is a just picture of the ravages of the sea and sea-monsters on an inundated Delta; and, by the conflicts thus incessantly waged, may be meant the contests of adverse colonies, struggling against each other for the possession of the country.

Two other monsters are also said to have desolated Egypt in these remote æras; SANI and RAHU: by the first of which they mean the planet Saturn in his most malignant aspect; by Rahu they must mean the Typhon whose combats with Osiris are so renowned in ancient fable; for, thus Mr. Wilford: "RAHU is represented, on account of his tyranny, as an immense river-dragon, or crocodile, or rather a fabulous monster with four talons, called Graha, from a root, implying *violent seizure*; and, in the Purauns, it seems to be the creature of poetical fancy. The tyrant, however, in his human shape, had six children, all equally mischievous with their father. In his allegorical character, he was decapitated by Veeshnu; (that is, Veeshnu incarnate in Rama;) his lower extremity became the Cetu, or dragon's tail, and his head is still called Rahu, the ascending node." Concerning Sani, a tyrant perhaps constellated in Saturn, there is in the same record a most remarkable relation; for, he is said to have been expelled Egypt when *Arama, a grandson of Satyaurata,* (plainly the eldest Rama,) died; which incontestably marks the identity of the character. In truth, all this must be considered as history blended with physics, marking the gradual progress of improvement that took place among men and in the countries at first inhabited by them. The Typhon of the Egyptians is the Sanchasura of the Brahmins; the Python of the Greeks, (the Greeks, who, emigrating from Egypt, under Danaus, transported with them the enormous mass of her mythological superstitions,) that tremendous serpent, breathing devouring flames, is, with the small alteration of a letter, the Typhon of Egypt; his being slain by the Pythian Apollo, in the one region, is the copy of his destruction by Horus,

the son of Osiris, in the other; and the whole may ultimately allude to the power of the sun drying up the stagnant lakes of Egypt, and consuming by his scorching beam the venomous reptiles concealed within their slimy bosom.

The important particulars which I am enabled, by Mr. Wilford, to impart to the reader concerning DEO NAUSH, or DEVA NAHUSHA, the temporary sovereign of MERU, whence, doubtless, the title of *Dionysius* among the Greeks was formed, and the name and story of the mountain *Meros* derived, are to be found in the following Indian legend, which I shall preface with what he has communicated at more detail than Sir William Jones concerning that mountain. On the latter subject he observes: "According to the orthodox Hindoos, the globe is divided into two hemispheres, both called Meru; but the superior hemisphere is distinguished by the name of Sumeru, which implies beauty and excellence, in opposition to the lower hemisphere, or Cumeru, which signifies the reverse. By Meru, without any adjunct, they generally mean the higher, or northern, hemisphere, which they describe, with a profusion of poetical imagery, as the seat of delights; while they represent Cumeru as the dreary habitation of demons, in some parts intensely cold, and in others so hot that the waters are continually boiling. In strict propriety, Meru denotes the pole and the polar regions; but it is the celestial north pole round which they place the gardens and metropolis of INDRA, while YAMA holds his court in the opposite polar circle, or the station of the Asoors, who warred with the Soors, or gods of the firmament."

This geographical description is absolutely necessary to the elucidation of the legend itself, which, our author observes, is manifestly connected with the oldest history and mythology in the world. "INDRA, king of Meru, having slain a person of the sacerdotal class, was obliged to retire from the world, in order to perform the penance ordained for the crime of Brahmahatya, or the murder of a Brahmin: his dominions were soon in the greatest disorder, and the rebel Dityes

oppressed the Devas, who applied for assistance to NAHUSHA, a prince of distinguished virtues, whom they unanimously elected king of their heavenly mansions, with the title of DEVANAHUSHA. His first object was to reduce the Dityes and the sovereigns of all the Dweeps, who had shaken off their allegiance; for which purpose he raised an immense army, and marched through the interior Cusha-Dweep, or Iran and Arabia, through the exterior Dweep of Cusha, or Ethiopia, through Sancha-Dweep, or Egypt, through Varaha-Dweep, or Europe, through Chandra-Dweep, and through the countries now called Siberia and China. When he invaded Egypt, he overthrew the combined forces of the Cutila-Cesas and Syama-Muchas with so terrible a carnage, that the Cali (the Nile) was reported to have swallowed up the natives of Egypt, whose bodies were thrown into her stream. During his travels, he built many places of worship, and gave each of them the title of Devanahusham: the principal rivers of the countries through which he passed were also distinguished by his name, NAHUSHA being an appellation of the Nile, of the Chacshu or Oxus, of the Varaha or Ister, and of several others. He returned through India to Meru.

" This fable of DEVA-NAHUSHA, who is always called Deo-Naush in the popular dialects, is clearly the same in part with that of Dionysus, whether it allude to any single personage or to a whole colony; and we see in it the origin of the Grecian fiction, that of Dionysus being sewed up in the Meros, or thigh, of Jupiter; for Meru, on which Deva-Nahusha resided for a time, was the seat of Indra, the god of the firmament, and Jupiter of India."*

In the above Sanscreet relation, we see, is exhibited a sweep of conquest far beyond what even the Greek writers have assigned to Bacchus; for, it takes in the whole of the habitable world, and in my opinion, as Nahusha is said to have been a prince of distinguished virtue, can only allude to the first virtuous colonies of Shemite ex-

* Mr. Wilford in the Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 245.

traction with Satyaurata-Menu, or some other patriarchal chief, at their head, conquering the stubborn and malignant race of Cuthite origin, who opposed his equitable laws, and aimed to establish on the earth a system of sanguinary despotism or involve all things in a state of boundless anarchy. If, however, we understand the passage just cited only in a mythological sense, it may allude to the physical evil that had overspread the face of the earth, the ferocious savages, the inundating waters, and the pestilential vapours, personified under the form of demons, malignant in mind and hideous of aspect. Thus far in the parallel Osiris, or Bacchus, has been considered as a conqueror; his more particular resemblance to the Indian Eswara, as well as his more honourable character, considered as the patron of arts and letters, is displayed in the subsequent Indian legend, in which is clearly traced the origin of each of these celebrated names.

" We read in the Mahad-Himalaya-Chanda, that, after a deluge, from which very few of the human race were preserved, men became ignorant and brutal, without arts or sciences, and even without a regular language: that part of Sancha-Dweep in particular was inhabited by various tribes, who were perpetually disputing; but that Iswara descended among them, appeased their animosities, and formed them into a community of citizens, mixed, without invidious distinctions; whence the place where he appeared was denominated Misra-Sthan: that he sent his consort Vageswari, or the goddess of speech, to instruct the rising generations in arts and languages; for which purpose she also visited the Dweep of Cusha. Now the ancient city of Misra was Memphis; and, when the seat of government was transferred to the opposite side of the river, the new city had likewise the name of Misr, which it still retains; for Alkahirah, or the *conqueress*, vulgarly Cairo, is merely an Arabic epithet.

" Vagiswara, or Vagisa, commonly pronounced Bagiswar and Bagis, means the *lord of speech*; but I have seen only one temple dedicated to a god with that title: it stands at Gangapur, formerly

Dehterea, near Benares, and appears to be very ancient. The priests of Bagiswara offer to his consort a lower mantle with a red fringe, and an earthen pot shaped like a coronet. To the god himself they present a vase full of arrack; and they even sacrifice a hog to him, pouring its blood before the idol, and restoring the carcase to its owner; a ceremony which the Egyptians performed in honour of Bacchus Osiris, whom I suppose to be the same deity, as I believe the Bassarides to have been so named from Bassari. Several demi-gods (of whom Cicero reckons five) had the name of Bacchus; and it is not improbable that some confusion has been caused by the resemblance of names: thus, Bagiswara was changed by the Greeks into Bacchus Osiris; and, when they introduced a foreign name with the termination of a case in their own tongue, they formed a nominative from it: hence, from Bhagawan, also, they first made Bacchon, and afterwards Bacchos; and, partly from that strange carelessness conspicuous in all their inquiries, partly from the reserve of the Egyptian priests, they melted the three divinities of Egypt and India into one, whom they miscalled Osiris."

It has already been observed, that some mythological writers, with no small shew of reason on their side, refer us to the character of Noah for an explanation of the principal circumstances related of Osiris. Among these, the most eminent are Dr. Shuckford and Mr. Bryant, but more particularly the latter gentleman in his often-cited Analysis of Ancient Mythology.

Throughout that learned and elaborate work, Mr. Bryant considers Osiris as the great patriarch; and insists, that all the rites instituted in Egypt and the East, in honour of that deified prince, have an immediate allusion to Noah. Among much other very impressive evidence, he mentions that remarkable circumstance of the ceremony of shutting up Osiris in his ark taking place on the twentieth day of the month Athyr, "the precise month, and day of the month, on which Noah entered the ark." This name of Dionusos he derives from Dios-Nusos; for, by the latter term, he argues, the word Noah,

or Nuh, could alone be properly expressed in the Greek tongue.— He then adds,

"We must consider the account given of Dionusus as the history of the Dionusians. This history is two-fold. Part relates to their rites and religion, in which the great events of the infant world, and the preservation of mankind in general, were recorded. In the other part, which contains the expeditions and conquests of this personage, are enumerated the various colonies of the people, who were denominated from him. They were the same as the Osirians and Herculeans; all of one family, though under different appellations."*

On the above-mentioned subject of the dawning sciences in the renovated world, I ought not to omit the information contained in a preceding page of Mr. Wilford's Dissertation, that the celebrated mystic volumes attributed to Hermes, the contemporary, the friend, and counsellor, of Osiris, and who, during his absence on his Indian expedition, was left, with Isis, joint regent of his kingdom, are, by Mr. Wilford, conceived to be no other than the four Vedas of India; those Vedas which, containing the whole circle of human science, and the prescribed rules for the proper worship of the Deity, are supposed, by the Indians, to have been revealed, from Heaven, to Brahma, their great legislator, for promulgation among men. In the sixth volume of Indian Antiquities, however, I have discussed, at such considerable length, the parallel of Buddha, the Indian Mercury, and the Egyptian Hermes, and, in the ninth Incarnation of Veeshnu, under that title, shall have so much to observe, in addition to that discussion, that it is unnecessary for me, at present, to enter more at large into the consideration of this novel, but apparently well-founded, opinion: for, of the celebrated Hermetic Books, the boast and admiration of ancient Egypt, (the Pimander in our possession being universally allowed to be a spurious work,) where are the remains?

* Analysis, vol. i. p. 274.

or who, of the most ancient among the Greek writers, except Sanchoniathon, ever pretended to have obtained a sight of them? Yet, that such books existed, and were solemnly borne, by priests appointed for that purpose, in the procession at the pomps of Isis, we have the concurrent testimony of many respectable writers in antiquity, and the names of them all, to the amount of forty-two, are enumerated by Fabricius in the first book of the Bibliotheca Græca. The four Vedas themselves make as many large volumes in folio; and have been collected by the zeal, and are now reposited by the munificence, of Colonel Polier, in the British Museum. The great increase in the number, from four to forty-two, may be accounted for, by supposing that the whole work might be divided into so many books, or distinct treatises; as, for instance, the first, consisting of hymns in honour of the gods; the second, containing rules for the conduct of kings in the government of empires; the third, on astronomy; the fourth, on geometry; the fifth, on medicine; the sixth, on music, &c. &c.* So little, therefore, being known to us of their contents, there is reason to suspect that the venerated originals have continued to remain, till very recently, in sacred repose among the Brahmins of Cashmere and Benares; and that the mystic volumes of Egypt, which Sanchoniathon translated into Greek, (if ever he did thus translate them,) might possibly have been either the Vedas, the Pooraun, or commentaries on those Vedas, or, at least, tablets inscribed with doctrines founded on the basis of the principles in religion and science contained in the sacred books of India. These books, the Pooraun affirm, were carried out of India into Egypt by a blameless and persecuted race of men, named Pallis, who emigrated thither in the earliest periods of the Indian empire. The history of this migration forms so important a part of the larger history of India, and is ultimately so connected with that of VARAHA-DWEEP,

* Vide Fabricii Biblioth. Græc. lib. i. cap. xi. p. 75.

or Europe, that it becomes necessary for me to present the reader with it, in considerable detail, in Mr. Wilford's own words, for it does not admit of abridgement, as it will prepare him for those more momentous exploits in which he will hereafter find them engaged on the theatre of either continent. This legend again introduces to us the giant TAREKEE, (written, by Mr. Wilford, with, perhaps, stricter conformity to Sanscreet orthography, TARACHYA, and who, at length, proves to have been an impious and oppressive rajah, the seat of whose empire was on the high mountains called Vindhya by the Sanscreet, and Vendian by the Greek, geographers,) on account of whose tyrannical conduct the virtuous race above-mentioned were compelled to fly from India, and seek shelter on the banks of the Nile.

" Irshu, surnamed Pingacsha, the son of Ugra, lived in India to the south-west of Cashi, near the Naravindhya river, which flowed, as its name implies, from the Vindhya mountains; the place of his residence to the south of those hills was named Palli, a word now signifying a large town and its district, or Pali, which may be derived from Pala, a herdsman or shepherd. He was a prince mighty and warlike, though very religious; but his brother Tarachya, who reigned over the Vindhyan mountaineers, was impious and malignant; and the whole country was infested by his people, whom he supported in all their enormities: the good king always protected the pilgrims to Caśi or Varanes in their passage over the hills, and supplied them with necessaries for their journey; which gave so great offence to his brother, that he waged war against Irshu, overpowered him, and obliged him to leave his kingdom; but Mahadeva, proceeds the legend, assisted the fugitive prince and the faithful Pallis, who accompanied him; conducting them to the banks of the Cali, (the Nile,) in Sancha-Dweep, where they found the Sharmicas, or Shemites, and settled among them. In that country they built the temple and town Punyavati or Punya-Nagari; words implying holiness and purity, which

it imparts, say the Hindoos, to zealous pilgrims: it is believed at this day to stand near the Cali, on the low hills of Mandara, which are said, in the Pooraums, to consist of red earth; and on those hills the Pallis, under their virtuous leader, are supposed to live, like the Gandharvas, on the summit of Himalaya, in the lawful enjoyment of pleasures; rich, innocent, and happy, though intermixed with some Mlechhas, or people who speak a barbarous dialect, and with some of a fair complexion. The low hills of Mandara include the tract called Meroe or Merhoe, by the Greeks; in the centre of which is a place named Mandara in the Jesuits' map, and Mandera by Mr. Bruce, who says, that of old it was the residence of the shepherds, or Palli, kings.

"To the king of the Pallis, named also Palli from those whom he governed, Mahadeva gave the title of Nairrita, having appointed him to guard the nairriti, or south-west; and, though he was a Pisacha by birth, or naturally bloody-minded, yet he was rewarded for his good disposition, and is worshipped in India to this day, among the eight Dic-Palas, or guardians of as many quarters, who constantly watch, on their elephants, for the security of Casi, and other holy places in Jambu-Dweepa: but the abode of his descendants is declared, in the Pooraums, to be still on the banks of the Cali, or Nila.

"This account of the Pallis has been extracted from two of the eighteen Pooraums, entitled Scanda, or the god of war, and Brahmanda, or the mundane egg. We must not omit, that they are said to have carried from India not only the Atharva-Veda, which they had a right to possess, but even the three others, which (not being Brahmins) they acquired clandestinely, so that the four books of ancient Indian scripture once existed in Egypt; and it is remarkable, that the books of Egyptian science were exactly four, called the books of Harmonia, or Hermes,* which are supposed to have con-

* See Bryant's Analysis, vol. ii. p. 150.

tained subjects of the highest antiquity. Nonnus mentions the first of them as believed to be coeval with the world; and the Brahmins assert, that their three first Vedas existed before the creation.

" The Pallis, remaining in India, have different names; those, who dwell to the south and south-west of Benares, are, in the vulgar dialects, called Palis and Bhils: they are now considered as outcasts, yet are acknowledged to have possessed a dominion in ancient times from the Indus to the eastern limits of Bengal, and even as far as Siam. Their ancestors are described as a most ingenious people, virtuous, brave, and religious; attached particularly to the worship of Mahadeva, under the symbol of the Linga or Phallus; fond of commerce, art, science; and using the Paisachi letters, which they invented. They were supplanted by the Rajaputras; and their country, before named Palisthan, was afterwards called Rajaputana in the vulgar dialect of their conquerors. The history of the Pallis cannot fail to be interesting, especially as it will be found much connected with that of Europe; and I hope soon to be supplied with materials for a fuller account of them: even their miserable remains in India must excite compassion, when we consider how great they once were, and from what height they fell through the intolerant zeal and superstition of their neighbours. Their features are peculiar; and their language is different, but perhaps not radically, from that of other Hindoos: their villages are still called Palli; many places, named Palita, or, more commonly, Bhilata, were denominated from them; and in general Palli means a village or town of shepherds or herdsmen. The city of Irshu, to the south of the Vindhya mountains, was emphatically styled Palli; and, to imply its distinguished eminence, Sri-Palli: it appears to have been situated on or near the spot where Bopal now stands, and to be the Saripalla of Ptolemy, which was called Palibothræ by the Greeks, and, more correctly in the Peutingerian table, Palipotra; for, the whole tribe are named Paliputras in the sacred books of the Hindoos, and were indubitably the Palibothri of the ancients, who, according to

Pliny, governed the whole country from the Indus to the mouth of the Ganges.

" We have said that Irshu had the surname of Pingacsha, or *yellow-eyed*, but, in some dictionaries, he is named Pingasa, or *yellow as fine gold*; and, in the track of his emigration from India, we meet with indications of that epithet: the Turkish geographers consider the sea-coast of Yemen, says Prince Kantemir, as part of India, calling its inhabitants yellow Indians: the province of Ghilan, says Texeira, has also the appellation of Hindu'l Asfar, or Yellow India; and the Caspian itself is by the Turks called the Yellow Sea.* This appears to be the origin of the Panchæan tribes in Arabia, Egypt, and Ethiopia, whose native country was called Panchæa, and the islands near it, Panchæan.

" Orus, the shepherd, mentioned in ancient accounts of Egypt, but of whom few particulars are left on record, was, most probably, Irshu the Palli, whose descendants, the Pingacshas, appear to have been the Phœnician shepherds, who once established a government on the banks of the Nile. The Phœnicians first made their appearance on the shores of the Erythrean (or Red) Sea, by which we must understand the whole Indian ocean between Afric and the Malay coasts; and the Poorauns thus represent it when they describe the waters of the Arunodadhi as reddened by the reflection of solar beams from the southern side of Mount Sumeru, which abounds with gems of that colour: something of this kind is hinted by Pliny.† It is asserted by some, (and from several circumstances it appears most probable,) that the first settlements of the Phœnicians were on the Persian Gulph, which is part of the Erythrean Sea. Justin says, that, having been obliged to leave their native country, (which seems from the context to have been very far eastward,) they settled near the Assyrian lake, which is the Persian Gulph; and we find an extensive district, named Pa-

* Muller, p. 106.

† Lib. vi. cap. 23.

lestine, to the east of the Euphrates and Tigris. The word Palestine seems derived from Pallisthan, the seat of the Pallis, or shepherds:* the Samaritans, who before lived in that country, seem to have been a remnant of the Pallis, who kept themselves distinct from their neighbours, and probably removed for that reason to the Palestine on the shore of the Mediterranean; but, after their arrival in that country, they wished to ingratiate themselves with the Jews and Phœnicians, and, for that purpose, claimed affinity with them, alleging, sometimes, that they were descended from Jacob, and, at other times, that they sprang from Pinkhas, a word pronounced also Phineas, and supposed (but, I think, less probably) to mean the son of Aaron. Certainly, the Jews looked upon the Samaritans as a tribe of Philistines; for, Mount Garizim was called Palitan and Peltan. Tremellius, in the wisdom of the son of Sirach, writes Palischthæa; but, in the Greek, we find the Philistines, who reside on the mount of Samaria.† But let us return to Palestine in Assyria.

" Whether the posterity of Pingacsha, or the yellow Hindoos, divided themselves into two bodies, one of which passed directly into Phœnice, and the other went, along the Arabian shores, to Abyssinia; or whether the whole nation first entered the southern parts of Arabia, then crossed over to Afric, and settled in the countries adjacent to the Nile; I cannot determine; but we have strong reasons to believe, that some, or all, of them remained a considerable time on the coast of Yemen. The Panchean tribes in that country were considered as Indians; many names of places in it, which ancient geographers mention, are clearly Sanscreet, and most of those names are found at present in India.

" In the spoken Indian dialects, Pallita is used for Palli, a herdsman; and the Egyptians had the same word; for, their priests told Herodotus that their country had once been invaded by Philitius, the shepherd, who used to drive his cattle along the Nile, and afterwards

* Lib. vi. cap. 70.

† Chap. l. v. 26.

built the pyramids. The Phyllitæ of Ptolemy, who are called Bulloits by Captain R. Covert, had their name from Bhilata, which, in India, means a place inhabited by Pallis or Bhils. The ancient shepherds made so conspicuous a figure in Egypt that it is needless to expatiate on their history; and, for an account of the shepherds in or near Abyssinia, I refer to the travels of Mr. Bruce."*

The above extract from the Poorauns unfolds to us various circumstances of great moment in this historical inquiry. In the first place, it introduces us to the ancestors of the PALIBOTHRI, or PALLIPUTRAS, the most numerous, powerful, and, according to classical and native writers, renowned, tribe of Indians, even till the days of Alexander, whose dominion we see extended from the Indus, or, at least, we may assert, from the most easterly river of the Panjab, to the eastern limits of Bengal. In the second place, it informs us, that they were, in religion, Seevites, for which they were persecuted and expelled; and imported the Seevite or Phallic doctrines, and fire-worship, into Egypt and Syria; sailing thence from Phœnice, as we shall hereafter find, into Britain and the western world. In the third place, it discloses to us the primæval race who, under the name of the dynasty of shepherd-kings, conquered Egypt from its first possessors, the Cushite sovereigns, and affords a more satisfactory answer to the question which Mr. Bruce supposes his readers to ask,† "*Whence did these shepherds come, and at what time, into Egypt?*" than he himself, unassisted by the knowledge imparted by Sanscreet books, has been able to return; while his very singular relation, in the same page, from the Axum Chronicle, of a serpent conquering the province of Tigræ, is, by preceding extracts from Indian chronicles, confirmed, and traced to its true allegorical source. Finally, we must be convinced by it of one or the other of these two propositions; either that the Vedas of India, thus transported into Egypt, have been appropriated, by the Egyptian priests, to themselves, and

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 171. † Bruce's Travels, vol. i. p. 397.

called the books of Hermes; or, on the contrary, that the Hermetic books and philosophy have been purloined and translated by the Brahmins, and are the foundation of all the boasted wisdom of the old Brachmans.

While we are thus comparing the *Sanscreet* with the *Classical* History of Egypt, as connected with India, it would be improper wholly to omit the curious account to be found in the Poorauns concerning that disputed fact, the origin and founder of the pyramids. The quotation is peculiarly important, because it is the only place in which I find the name of the tyrant *Nirmaryada*, the *Nimrod* of Scripture, occurring; and it is not irrelative to our subject, because the pyramids are generally allowed by mythologists to have been temples raised in honour of Osiris, the SUN.

" An ancient king," says our author, citing the Mahacalpa, " surnamed Vatsa, because he was descended from Vatsa, a celebrated sage, passed a hundred years in a dark cavern of Crishna-Giri, or the Black Mountain, on the banks of the Cali, performing the most rigorous acts of devotion. At length, Veeshnu, surnamed Guhasaya, or *dwelling in caves*, appeared to him, and promised him, all that he desired, *male issue*; adding, that his son should be named Tamovatsa, in allusion to the darkness in which his father had so long practised religious austerities. Tamovatsa became a warlike and ambitious, but wise and devout, prince: he performed austere acts of humiliation to Veeshnu, with a desire of enlarging his empire, and the god granted his boon. Having heard that Misra-Sthan was governed by Nirmaryada, (probably a direct descendant of Nimrod,) who was powerful and unjust, he went with his chosen troops into that country; and, without a declaration of war, began to administer justice among the people, and to give them a specimen of a good king: he even treated with disdain an expostulatory message from Nirmaryada, who marched against him with a formidable army, but was killed in a battle which lasted twelve days, and in which

Tamovatsa fought like another Parasu-Rama. The conqueror placed himself on the throne of Misra, and governed the kingdom with perfect equity. His son, Bahyavatsa, devoted himself to religion, and dwelt in a forest, having resigned his dominion to his son, Rucmavatsa, who tenderly loved his people, and so highly improved his country, that, from his just revenues, he amassed an incredible treasure. His wealth was so great, that he raised three mountains, called Rucmadri, Rajatadri, and Retnadri, or the mountain of gold, of silver, and of gems: the author says mountains, but it appears from the context that they were fabrics, like mountains, and probably in a pyramidal form.

" These three stupendous edifices, called mountains, from their size and form, there can be little or no doubt, were the three great pyramids near Misra-Sthan, or Memphis; which, according to the Pooraums and to Pliny, were built from motives of ostentation; but, according to Aristotle, were monuments of tyranny. Rucmavatsa was no tyrant to his own people, whom he cherished, says the Mahacalpa, as if they had been his own children; but he might have compelled the native Egyptians to work, for the sake of keeping them employed, and subduing their spirit. It is no wonder that authors differ as to the founders of those vast buildings; for, the people of Egypt, says Herodotus, held their memory in such detestation, that they would not even pronounce their names; they told him, however, that they were built by a herdsman, whom he calls Philitius, and who was a leader of the Palis or Bhils mentioned in our first section. The pyramids might have been called mountains of gold, silver, and precious stones, in the hyperbolical style of the East; but I rather suppose that the first was said to be of gold, because it was coated with yellow marble; the second of silver, because it had a coating of white marble; and the third of jewels, because it excelled the others in magnificence, being coated with a beautiful

spotted marble of a fine grain, and susceptible of an exquisite polish."*

The reader will, doubtless, be of opinion, that it is now high time to bring to a conclusion these extended strictures concerning Osiris, or Dionysius: this astonishing compound of fact and fable, attached, by Egyptians, Greeks, and Indians, to the history of that celebrated personage, who is now the Sun and Sirius, now an Egyptian god, and now an Indian king, Noah and Satyaurata, a conqueror and a chimera. My intention in presenting him with so prolonged an account was, that he might have the whole that relates to this long-disputed character in one view before him, and determine for himself to which side of the intricate question he should accede; whether to Shuckford and Bryant's opinion, that, under this veil of allegory, Noah is disguised, as I own myself greatly inclined to believe; with Jones, that it is Rama; or, with Wilford, that it is Eswara; or whether, in some degree, the character may not exhibit a combination of the leading features of all the three, tinctured with the prepossessions of their respective historians. Before we conclude, however, it is necessary, as I began with detailing the accounts of classical writers, that I should be consistent, and conclude with their details relating to the family whom he left behind; a circumstance which proves that those writers, at least, do not resolve the whole into allegory. After asserting that Dionysius founded the first regular monarchy in India, and that he was revered as the sole sovereign of the country during the three years he resided there, they add, that he left, established on the throne, SPARTEMBAS, one of the nobles who attended him, and most honoured with his regard and confidence; and that the latter worthily presided on that throne during fifty-two years. According to Arrian, he was succeeded by his son, BUDYAS, whose reign did not exceed twenty years. His successor was CRADEVAS; and this dynasty continued to flourish, in re-

* Savary's Travels, vol. i. p. 246; and Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 226.

gular lineal descent, for many generations. The government then became elective among the native princes of India, and continued in this form till the invasion of Alexander.*

In all probability this remnant of Indian history was founded on what the Greeks had learned from the natives in detached and broken fragments concerning the Avatars. On that supposition, if Dionysius were, in fact, Rama, the name Spartembas may be only a corruption of Hanumas, the celebrated general of that Indian hero. By Budyas, again, (Βȣδυας, in Arrian,) they may mean, and it is probably they did mean, Buddha, who appeared in a succeeding Avatar; and by Cradevas, Creeshna, whose surprising history will presently be detailed.

The probability above-stated, of the Greeks having inserted in their accounts of India detached portions of the Avatars, is greatly increased by what is expressly recorded in the same page of Arrian, relative to the establishment of the kingdom and worship of Creeshna, under the name of Hercules, among the Suraseni, in a region washed by the river Ιωϐαρες, (the *Jomunes*, or *Jumna*,) and the mention of Μεθορα, or Mathura, on its banks, where, in fact, to this day, Creeshna is principally worshipped, and where the ruins of his magnificent pagoda are still to be seen. To the history of that most ancient Hercules, who, according to the Greek classical writers, was the second great invader of India, our attention must be directed in the subsequent chapter.

* Arrian in Indicis, p. 321. Edit. Gronovii.

CHAPTER III.

The Invasion of India by HERCULES, *the First of the Heroes of that Name, who was probably the same Person with* BELUS, *or* BALI, *the Founder of the Balic Dynasty in India, and who is denominated, by Cicero,* HERCULES BELUS.

HAVING throughout this volume and the Indian Antiquities, for reasons repeatedly adduced, contended that the Assyrian, and, we may add, the Tyrian, Belus (for, they were evidently the same) was the original Hercules of antiquity, gigantic in strength and form, the dauntless explorer of land and sea, who cleared the forests and drained the marshes of the rugged earth after the incursions of the inundation, who tamed the savage Nemæan monsters, combated the venomous Lernæan serpents, and chased away the dreadful Stymphalides that infested the air itself; the same Belus (that is, the Βηλος απ' Ευφρηταο) mentioned by Nonnus, whose colonies, travelling to the remotest regions of the earth, extended through every country, even to the extremity of Britain itself, the renown of the Belidæ and Heraclidæ: after setting out with this hypothesis, I ought, perhaps, in the reader's opinion, to have considered what the classical authors of antiquity have asserted concerning this celebrated hero before I investigated the character of Osiris. But, since many circumstances in that history have an apparent reference to the character of Noah himself, undoubtedly the first universal sovereign after the flood, and as those authors are unanimous in asserting Osiris to have been the first conqueror of India, I did not think it proper to violate the order of time, and oppose the voice of antiquity, by earliest noticing the exploits of the Indian Hercules, that Hercules whom Cicero, I have before observed, enumerating the various he-

roes who bore the name, denominates Hercules-Belus; *Quintus in India, qui Belus dicitur.** There is scarcely a region of the earth to which his renown has not reached, and upon whose annals his name is not engrafted. The snows of Scythia and the sands of Lybia alike attest the toils which he endured and the feats which he accomplished; and yet, amidst all this blaze of heroism, we too probably still wander in the vale of delusion, and the sun, in the constellation Hercules, or, in other words, the sun shining in meridian strength, still recurs the perpetual actor through the varied drama.

When men are identified with constellations, as is the case with all the numerous heroes of the solar dynasties of Asia, how shall history perform its allotted task with order or gravity? Yet would it be absurd entirely to exclude from its page the character and feats of Hercules, because the former is involved in allegory, and many of the latter are wild and extravagant. When we are informed by Diodorus that a Hercules, superior in strength and courage to any mortal then living, invaded India, at that period a beautiful desert, and the people plunged in ignorance and barbarity; that he conquered this savage race; that he divided the whole country into separate kingdoms, over which he appointed distinct sovereigns from the males of his own family, which are said to have been numerous, and that many of those kingdoms, as well as the descendants of those sovereigns, flourished even till the invasion of Alexander; that he built many noble cities throughout the country, and, among others, Palibothra, which, from both native and foreign records, we know to have been among the oldest, if not the most ancient, of all erected in the country; especially when that writer is so particular in his narration as to inform us that he erected in it a stately palace, constructed ramparts of great strength, and fortified the whole with a deep and broad ditch, into which, with a view to render it unapproachable by an enemy, he turned an adjacent river so as entirely

* Cicero de Natura Deorum, lib. iii. p. 81.

to surround it;* when we are informed also by Arrian, who had it from eye-witnesses, that this city was, in fact, called the royal or imperial Palibothra, had on its walls four hundred and seventy towers, with sixty-five gates, and had a prodigious fosse, (εξαπλεθρον,) six acres in breadth, and forty-five feet in depth; we are by no means inclined to think such very particular accounts the mere effect of invention, but proceed to examine the truth of the assertion in the writings of native Indian geographers, and to explore the dynasties of their ancient kings, for such a distinguished character as is above described.

Again, as we know that the description of *Palibothra*, or *Patna*, on the Ganges, is geographically just, and can trace the vestiges of buildings and walls of vast magnitude and extent, we are naturally led, in the next place, attentively to consider to whom in particular among the ancient-recorded heroes of India the character of such a conqueror is most applicable; and the great warriors, Bali, Rama, and Creeshna, who flourished in æras when fable and history were inseparably blended, immediately rush upon our view. But, as the history and character of Osiris seem to be absorbed in those of the three Ramas, or rather of that one great deified prince known to the Brahmins under three distinct representations, our attention is necessarily turned towards Bali as the prototype of the allegorical Hercules, whose triumphs were the result rather of *strength* than of *wisdom* and *prudence*, as in the case of Osiris, or Bacchus, and who is known rather as a subjugator of nations than as a reformer of their manners, as the founder of cities rather than as the institutor of laws. It must be added, however, that in the life of Creeshna there are many prominent particulars very nearly resembling the wonderful events in the life of Hercules; as his conflict with the venom-breathing serpent Calya, sent to destroy him in his infancy, and whose destruction he accomplished; his vanquishing

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii. p. 124, edit. Rhodoman.

giants by holding them up aloft and strangling them in the air, as Hercules destroyed Antæus; his visit to Hades; with many other similar adventures, which the reader will find inserted at length in the future pages of this volume, and which demonstrate, that the Hercules of the Greeks, at least, if not the Egyptians, has been formed out of the combined incidents in both histories.

It is therefore only with the Egyptian, who was the same with the Assyrian, Hercules, and was known to the Assyrians and Indians under the name of Belus, (the Zeus Belus of Sanchoniatho,) that we can have any concern, during our inquiry into the events of these very remote periods. His rugged dress and uncouth armour, the tiger's skin, and his club, mark the high antiquity of the character who bore them, as well as the barbarity of the æra in which he flourished; his being accounted, also, the son of Jupiter implies a tacit confession in his historians of his superiority to every other hero of the name, and his immediate connection with the first post-diluvian race of deified mortals, on whom those lofty titles were conferred. The Tyrians did not exaggerate, by many centuries, when they told Herodotus, while he was admiring his superb temple in their city, that his rites had been established there, and the city founded by him, two thousand three hundred years previous to the period of his visit. It was probably one of the first cities built after the dispersion by the adventurous race, who, under their dauntless leader, or at least a leader bearing this title, first explored the deep, and sailed to the farthest west. The Higher Egypt seems to have been the proper scene of his triumphs by land, though we hear of him in his famous pillars at the very extremity of the African continent. In fact he was one of the *dii majores* of Egypt; and, in Manetho's dynasties, succeeds Thoth, or Hermes, who was the friend and secretary of Osiris. In the records of India, given us by Arrian, the Indian Hercules is said to have worn the same habit as the Theban Hercules;* and to have

* Arrian in Indicis, p. 321, Gronov. edit.

left a daughter named PANDÆA, which is a very remarkable fact, as we shall hereafter find the race of *Pandu* to be most celebrated in the earliest pages of ancient Sanscreet history; and there is a kingdom, situated at the extremity of the peninsula, denominated the *kingdom of Pandion.*

Again, Hercules, as stated in the last chapter, is said to have had his rites flourishing in the time of Megasthenes among the Suraseni, whose two principal cities are Methora and Clisoboras, on the navigable river Jobares, which should doubtless be Jomanes, or the Jumna, as the cities alluded to are indisputably Mathura, on that river, and Allahabad, known anciently by the name of Piyaug, at the confluence of the Jumna with the Ganges. This is an additional proof of what was before observed, that the Indian Hercules is a mixed character, compounded out of the history of Bali and Creeshna; for, Mathura and its environs are the theatre of all Creeshna's exploits; his temple and memory are still venerated in that region, and his exploits sung at two annual festivals, holden there on the 23d of Bhadun and the 15th of Kartick,* by the virgins of Mathura; which, for forty-eight cose round, is considered as holy ground by its devout inhabitants.† If, however, the Theban Hercules be known in India, not less is Creeshna known for his heroic feats on the plains of Egypt; a circumstance which appears to contradict the assertion, attributed to the Indians in Arrian, that their Hercules never carried his arms out of India; for, among other passages that might be cited in proof of it, is the following relation of Mr. Wilford's often-cited Dissertation on Egypt and the Nile: that Nile, whose very name, in Sanscreet books, is Creeshna.

" CREESHNA was VEESHNU himself, according to the most orthodox opinion; and it was he who visited the countries adjacent to the Nile, destroyed the tyrant SANCHASURA, introduced a more perfect mode of worship, cooled the conflagrations which had re-

* Ayeen Akbery, vol. iii. p. 256. † Ibid.

peatedly desolated those adust regions, and established the government of the Cutila-Cesas, or genuine Egyptians, on a permanent basis." These exploits are detailed at large in the two subsequent extracts, composed in the usual romantic style of the Indian historians.

" The other parts of Sancha-Dweep Proper, adjacent to the sea, were inhabited by the subjects of SANCHASURA, whose palace was a shell in the ocean; but they are said to have resided in shells on or near the mountains of the African continent. They are represented as cannibals, and even as demons incarnate, roaming by night and plundering the flat country, from which they carried off men, women, and children, whom they devoured alive; that is, as raw flesh is now eaten in Abyssinia. From this account it should seem, that the Sanchasuras lived in the caves of mountains along the coast, while their king resided in a cavern of the small island Suakem, where there still is a considerable town in the middle of a large bay. He there, probably, concealed his plunder, and thence was reported to dwell in the ocean. The name of that island appears to have been derived from Sukhim, the plural of Sukh, in Hebrew, and the Sanch of the Hindoos: by the ancient geographers it is called both Sukhæ, and the *Harbour of preserving Gods*, from the *preservation*, I suppose, of Sancha-Dweep and its inhabitants by the divine assistance of CREESHNA, who, with an army of deities, attacked and defeated SANCHASURA, pursuing him even through the sea, where he drew the monster from his shell, and put him to death."

The above quotation seems to allude to the conquests of Creeshna in the Lower Egypt; where the serpent-deity, according to the allegorizing way of writing among the Hindoos, reigned amidst the desolation occasioned by inundations and pestilential vapours steaming from stagnant marshes, as yet undrained. The quotation following appears to mark the progress of his triumph in the Thebaid and Ethiopia, where armies of elephants, or at least men riding on elephants, with their elephantine sovereign at their head, are alone to be expected; because there, in fact, those elephants could alone find

food to support them, and shade to shelter their enormous bodies from the beams of the tropical sun.

"The smaller Creeshna was so denominated either because its waters were black, or because it had its origin from an atchievement of CREESHNA; and its name Asthimati was given on an occasion, which is related at large in the Brahmanda. When CREESHNA visited Sancha-Dweep, and had destroyed the demon who had infested that delightful country, he passed along the bank of a river, and was charmed with a delicious odour which its waters diffused in their course. He was eager to view the source of so fragrant a stream, but was informed by the natives that it flowed from the temples of an elephant, immensely large, milk-white, and beautifully formed; that he governed a numerous race of elephants; and that the odoriferous fluid, which exuded from his temples in the season of love, had formed the river: which, from his name, was called Sanchanaga; that the Devas, or inferior gods, and the Apsaras, or nymphs, bathed and sported in its waters, impassioned and intoxicated with the liquid perfume. The Hindoo poets frequently allude to the fragrant juice which oozes, at certain seasons, from small ducts in the temple of the male elephant, and is useful in relieving him from the redundant moisture with which he is then oppressed; and they even describe the bees as allured by the scent, and mistaking it for that of the sweetest flowers: but, though Arrian mentions this curious fact, no modern naturalist I believe has taken notice of it. CREESHNA was more desirous than before of seeing so wonderful a phenomenon, and formed a design of possessing the elephant himself; but SANCHANAGA led against him a vast army of elephants, and attacked him with such fury that the incarnate god spent seven days in subduing the assailants, and seven more in attempting to seize their leader, whom at last he was obliged to kill with a stroke of his chacra. The head of the huge beast had no sooner fallen on the ground, where it lay like a mountain, than a beautiful Yacsha, or genius, sprang from the body, who prostrated himself before

CREESHNA, informing him that he was VIJAYAVERDHANA, who had once offended MAHADEVA, and been condemned by him to pass through a mortal form; that he was supremely blessed in owing his deliverance to so mighty a god, and would instantly, with his permission, return to his appeased master. The victor assented, and left the field of battle; where, from the bones of the slain elephants, rose a lake, thence named Asthitaraga, from which flowed the river Asthimati, whose hallowed waters, adds the author of the Poorauns, remove sin and worldly affections."

These parallel accounts, I think, demonstrably prove not only the antiquity of the character and the reality of the invasion, under whatever name, but that the ancient records of both nations have been grafted on each other, and their dynasties confounded. The Greeks, acting with their usual ingenuousness, have adopted both accounts, have interwoven them with the more romantic fables of their own Hercules, and have thus increased the confusion and perplexity tenfold.

I do not mean to travel over the old and well-beaten ground of the labours of Hercules, but there are a few of them so connected with the Sanscreet narration of facts ascribed to Indian deities and heroes, that I cannot avoid mentioning them. Thus, the origin of the story of the Grecian Hercules slaying the Lernæan hydra (if not merely astronomical, and alluding to the sun rising as the constellation Hydra set, and consequently extinquishing the numerous stars in that constellation, poetically called its flaming heads) is evidently traced in CREESHNA, or the deity in the present instance incarnate in Hercules, as formerly in Osiris, or Dionysius, destroying the dæmon Sanchasura, or serpent-king of Egypt, with his army of snakes, his drawing him from his shell or palace, extirpating that numerous race of reptiles, clearing those worse than Lernæan fens, draining the marshes, and making canals to carry off the waters from the inundated Delta. Again, most of the circumstances in the story before alluded to, I mean that of the two serpents attacking Her-

cules in his infancy, are to be ſound in the adventures of the infant Creeshna with the serpent Caljya, who twined itself round his tender limbs, and would inevitably have destroyed him, had not the portion of divinity with which he was endowed rendered him invulnerable both to his assault and the poison that issued from each of his thousand flaming mouths;* a remarkable accumulation of resembling incidents, and certainly, from the great antiquity of the Indian fable, not borrowed by the Hindoo from the Grecian mythologists. The event of the combat was, that the divine child tore his thousand heads from his mangled body; and, *setting his foot on each of them*, danced upon them in triumphant exultation. The labours of conquering the wild boar of Erymanthus, that desolated Arcadia, and of attacking and expelling, from the same district, the Stymphalic birds, dreadful with iron beaks and leathern wings, who fed on human flesh, are again recognised in a legend of the Hindoos, in which the VARAHAS (whose leader was Varaheswara, or the king of a race in the form of *white boars*, said to have first peopled Europe, called, in Sanscreet, Vara-Dweepa) made war on the SARABBAS, a sort of monster, with the face of a lion and wings like a bird. The legend on which these tales are probably founded has not been yet translated by Mr. Wilford; but he promises it us in a future essay; and, possibly, the boar of Erymanthus, the most formidable chief of his fierce tribe, was only some tyrant, who, like the Mohammedan sovereigns of the *white* and *black ram*, bore the symbol of that animal on his banners; while the Stymphalides were, doubtless, cannibal or Troglodyte pirates, who infested the lake Stymphalus, in Arcadia, and the neighbourhood of the Peloponnesus, washed by the Ægean and Ionian seas. Mr. Wilford justly remarks, that the whole story of this war, according to Hesiod, was engraved on the shield of Hercules.

* Manuscript Life of Creeshna, from the Persian of Fyzee, in the possession of the author.

The following legend, also, though referred by Mr. Wilford to the history of the preceding invader of India, has probably some relation to the contest recorded of Hercules, or Veeshnu incarnate under the form of *strength personified*, with the Erymanthian boar.

" In the story of the war between OSIRIS and TYPHON, mention is made by Plutarch of a stupendous boar, in search of whom Typhon travelled, with a view, perhaps, to strengthen his own party, by making an alliance with him. Thus it is said in the Vaishnavagama, that CRORASURA was a demon, with the face of a boar, who, nevertheless, was continually reading the Vedas, and performing such acts of devotion, that VEESHNU appeared to him on the banks of the Brahmaputra, promising to grant any boon that he could ask. CRORASURA requested, that no creature, then existing in the three worlds, might have power to deprive him of life; and VEESHNU granted his request: but the demon became so insolent, that the Devatas, whom he oppressed, were obliged to conceal themselves, and he assumed the dominion of the world. VEESHNU was then sitting on a bank of the Cali, greatly disquieted by the malignant ingratitude of the demon; and, his wrath being kindled, a shape, which never before existed, sprang from his eyes : it was MAHADEVA, in his destructive character, who dispelled in a moment the anxiety of VEESHNU, whence he acquired the surname of CHINTAHARA. With flaming eyes, contracted brows, and his whole countenance distorted with anger, he rushed towards CRORASURA, seized him with fury, and carried him under his arm in triumph over the whole earth ; but, at length, cast him lifeless on the ground, where he was transformed into a mountain, still called the mountain of CRORA, or the boar."

If Hercules tamed the formidable bull of Crete, Creeshna likewise had an adventure with an Assoor, in the form of a most tremendous bull, " in size like a mountain, breathing flames, whose brazen feet tore up the ground, while his lofty horns pierced the sky." Of this bull, the infant deity, seizing the horns, threw him on

his back, and, after a desperate struggle, twisted his neck from his body.*

Again, one of the most famous exploits of Hercules was the recovery of his kine and flocks that had been stolen by Cacus, a notorious robber, who dwelt in the inaccessible heights of Mount Aventine, in Italy; which theft was discovered by the accidental lowing of some of the oxen in the cavern where they were confined. Now it is scarcely possible to read the account in the history of Creeshna of the theft of the herds and cow-boys of Nanda's farm, by Brahma, commenced terrestrial robber to try the divinity of Creeshna; of his hiding them all "in the cave of a mountain quite inaccessible;" of the yearning of the milch-cows when they heard the lowing of the calves as they grazed on the outside of the cavern, and the untimely giving down of their milk at the sound; without supposing the one legend a copy of the other, however in minuter parts differently related, and however incongruously assigned may be the characters.†

With respect to the particular labour of Hercules conquering Busiris, who was accustomed to sacrifice human victims on the altar of his father Neptune, but who was afterwards slain on that altar, a legend nearly similar is to be found in the Poorauns concerning Creeshna and Bhaveswara, or Bhava, with the title of Eswara, the destroying power of India, added to it. "Bhaveswara," observes Mr. Wilford, "seems to be the Busiris of Egypt; for, Strabo asserts positively that no Egyptian king bore that name, though altars, on which men were anciently sacrificed, were dedicated to Busiris, and the human victims of the Hindoos were offered to the consort of Bhaveswara. The Naramedha, or sacrifice of a man, is allowed by some ancient authorities; but, since it is prohibited, under pain of the severest torture in the next world, by the writers of the most esteemed Poorauns, we cannot imagine that any Brahmin would now

* Manuscript Life of Creeshna. † Ibid.

officiate at so horrid a ceremony; though it is asserted by some, that the Pariar nations, in different parts of India, disregard the prohibition; and that the Carharas, who were allowed by PARASU-RAMA to settle in the Concan, sacrifice a man, in the course of every generation, to appease the wrath of RENECU-DEVA, his mother."

The fable of the earth-born giant Antæus, whom Hercules destroyed by holding him up in the air, and squeezing the breath out of his body, appears to be the exact counter-part of the engagement of the infant Creeshna with the two gigantic Rakshas, sent by Cansa to destroy the child, who defeated them by disjointing every limb of one of them, and strangling the latter while struggling together in the air;* while that of his vanquishing Geryon, a tyrannical monster, with three bodies, or in other words three princes in alliance, reigning over three separate cities, but united in interest and blood, bears too near a resemblance to Seeva vanquishing the three sons of Tarekee and Treepoor, their three cities, to admit a doubt of its being of Indian origin.

Before we conclude this account of Hercules and his invasion of India, from classical writers, it is necessary again to remind the reader of that perpetual spirit of allegorizing which distinguished them scarcely less than the Indian fabulists, and which generally terminates in a comparative reference to the sun, its operations, and motions. Thus the battle of Hercules, who, I ought before to have mentioned, is, by some of the Greek writers, recorded to have been appointed general of Egypt during the absence of Osiris on his Indian expedition; his battle, I say, with Typhon, or Tuphon, (a word in Arabic signifying *deluge*,) which took place after the death of Osiris, may mean nothing more than the vigour of the solar heat, or Sol in Hercule, drying up the waters of the inundated Delta; also his extensive travels and his various labours may, in great part, be resolved into the progressive journey of the solar orb as it regards the zodiac, the

* Manuscript Life of Creeshna.

equator, and the two tropics, within which the most celebrated labours of Hercules were performed; while his pillars, situated at the western extremity of the old continent, designate the supposed limits of his travels in that region of the globe. This may appear to have, but, in reality, it has not, a direct tendency to destroy the credit of what has been historically related above; for, it will be remembered that Creeshna is the Indian Apollo, and Bali, or Belus, the Phœnician and Assyrian Baal-Samin, or lord-illuminator of heaven. The sun, in fact, seems to be the grand agent that opens and closes the scene of all Oriental history whatsoever in the earliest ages of the world.

Hercules being the name or title generally assigned to that primitive chieftain who led the first Asiatic colony by sea to Europe, through the Straits of Gades, where a superb temple was erected to his honour under the express denomination of the Phœnician Hercules, whom we have proved to have been not different from the Assyrian, and some important information relative to the name and first peopling of the British isles by an Indian race, having, through the unwearied industry of Mr. Wilford in investigating the Sanscreet records, been recently discovered, it will not, I trust, be considered as an unpardonable deviation from the immediate concerns of the Indian empire if I here present the reader with the result of his inquiry concerning that Indian colony who transplanted into these islands the religious rites and civil customs of Asia, known to us under the name of Druid. The usual custom among the ancients, so often noticed in these pages, of a descendant of a great family assuming the name and honours of its head, will reconcile every difficulty concerning the particular Hercules who undertook this adventurous voyage from that Gades where the first Hercules had set up his renowned pillars. I had occasion in the sixth volume of Indian Antiquities (p. 197) to remark, that one of the most curious and remarkable of the mythologic feats of Hercules was his sailing in a golden cup, which Apollo, or the Sun, had given him, to the

coasts of Spain, where he set up the pillars that bear his name. On this passage Macrobius remarks, *Ego autem arbitror non* POCULO *Herculem maria transvectum, sed navigio cui* SCYPHO *nomen fuit.** It was probably in allusion to this vase, or, to adopt the idea of Macrobius, this gilded vessel, that the Scythian Hercules, or rather Hercules, the father of Scythes, who founded the Scythian empire, and doubtless was not a different person from the first renowned hero of the name, that this Hercules gave, as Herodotus reports him to have given, to his sons, on dividing his empire among them, a belt, the clasp of which was adorned with a vase, an emblem retained by the Scythians on their belts to the time of our historian.† That Scythian and Cuthite are synonymous terms, has been demonstrated in Mr. Bryant's Analysis by innumerable proofs. The Scythian Hercules was still the Indian Belus, extending his conquests northward. The shepherds who emigrated from Asia to Egypt, who conquered it, who, for above two centuries and a half, enjoyed its throne, and whom Mr. Bryant expressly denominates the dynasty of Cuthite shepherds, were, therefore, probably only the Palli, or shepherds, alluded to by Mr. Wilford in a former page; a wandering race whose history has already been given at considerable length, and whose progress has been traced through Arabia and Syria to Phænice, on the coast of the Mediterranean. On that coast the greater part of them appear to have taken up their final abode, while others, more daring, with their leader Hercules, or Belus, or whatever name they might bestow upon him, launched into the vast ocean, and reached the Straits of Gades, whence they colonized Spain, Gaul, and Britain. The consonance on this subject, of Indian and classical writers of ancient and modern authorities, removes every idea of suspicion that might appear to shade the reality of this expedition, and will

* Vide Macrobii Saturnalia, lib. v. cap. 21, p. 522, edit. oct. 1670.

† Vide Herodotus, lib. vi. p. 328.

vindicate my insertion of the following account from the Sanscreet books of the British islands.

EXTRACTS, BY FRANCIS WILFORD, ESQ. FROM THE POORAUNS, OR SACRED BOOKS OF INDIA, RESPECTING THE BRITISH ISLES.

The British isles are called, in the Hindoo sacred books, TRICA-TACHEL, or THE MOUNTAIN WITH THREE PEAKS; for, the Poorauns consider all islands as so many mountains, the lower parts of which are covered by the sea.

These three peaks are SUVARNA-CUTA, or SUVARNA-SRINGA, RAJATA-CUTA, and AYA-CUTA, called also LOHA-CUTA.

They are also called Dweepas, a word signifying a country between two waters, (in the sense of Do-ab in Persian,) and then we say, Suvarna-Dweep, Rajata-Dweep, and Aya-Dweep.

ENGLAND.

Rajata-Dweep is more commonly called Sueta-Dweep, or the *white island*; an appellation as well known among the learned in the East as in the West.

IRELAND.

Suvarna-Dweep signifies the *golden island*; the word Suvarna signifies, also, *beautiful*, *excellent*, and, in this sense, Suvarna-Dweep or Suvarna-Cuta is perfectly synonymous with Sucuta or Scuta.

Suvarna, or Swarna, being an adjective-noun, it cannot be used alone, unless in a derivation-form, as Suvarneya, or Swarneya; and such is, in my humble opinion, the origin of the appellation of Juvernia and Juernia.

Scwuteya, or Scuteya, the regular derivative forms, are not used, but it seems that they were once in the West; hence the appellation

Scotia. However, in this sense, the word can have no affinity whatever with Scythia.

From the earliest periods Suvarneya was considered as the place of abode of the PITRIS, (literally *fathers,)* or Manes.

There were two places where the Pitris might be seen and consulted, according to the Poorauns. The first was on the summit of the highest mountain in the island (probably Croagh Patrick). The second is positively declared to be a narrow cave in a small island in a lake, the waters of which were *bitter*. There was the entrance of the Dirgha, or long passage into the infernal regions. This Dirgha is often mentioned in the Pooraunes.

These two places are called also PITRISTHAN, or the place of the Pitris. Pitrica is a derivative form seldom used in the Pooraums, but always in conversation and in the spoken dialects; for, every Hindoo knows PITRICASTHAN, though ignorant of its situation.

Now the words Pitrica, Patricius, Patric, &c. are not only similar in sound, but have also the same etymological origin. Hence it has been supposed that the Apostle of Ireland was the contriver of this mode of evocation of the *Manes*, or ancestors, at the place called Lough, the purgatory of St. Patric.

Here I must observe that the Hindoos acknowledge only a sort of temporary hell, or purgatory. The legends relating to this place are very numerous and ridiculous.

We are informed in the Pooraums that the Pitris were at last obliged to leave their favourite abode in Suvarneya, but the reason of their migration is not assigned. I suspect, however, it was on account of the invasion of the PALLI, or shepherds; for, before their arrival, the whole island was considered as sacred ground, and no mortal ever presumed to enter it without being previously qualified for his admission.

The Pitris fled with their leaders to the Dweepa, or Peninsula, of Aya, or Ayeya, where they are supposed to remain unmolested to this day.

Though the Pitris were forced to abandon Suvarna-Dweep, yet the Maha-Dewa, or gateway, at the entrance of the Dirgha, or long passage, still remains as it was, and every Hindoo supposes he is to go through it after death.

The gardens of the Hesperides are described in the Pooraums, where long and fulsome stories are to be found relating to them, and they are positively declared to be in Suvarna-Dweep.

Chandra-Dweep is generally used to signify the sacred isles in the west; however, it belongs properly to Sueta-Dweep, or the White Island.

LITERAL TRANSLATION OF A PASSAGE FROM THE BRAHMANDA POORAUN.

On the mountain of Suvarna, in Varaha-Dweep, or Europe, was a king of the race of Palli, (his name was Cracacheswara, or the lord or king of Cracacha,) he constantly honoured the gods and Pitris. Having killed deer in the forests, he gave their full share of the flesh to the gods, to the Pitris, and to the twice-born men, (or Brahmins,) then to his family. He had peculiarly devoted himself to the worship of the Pitris, and had fully conquered his passions. With fans made of the tails of lions he used to fan the image of Hari, (Veeshnu,) and was constantly meditating on Chandra-Rupi-Bhaghavan (or Veeshnu with the countenance of Lunus). He was perfectly free from worldly affection. There, in Suvarnia, is the Sthan, or place, of the Pitris; one road leads to Naraca, (or Tartarus,) the other to the abode of delight; every one according to his merits.

The king died, and went among the Nacshatra-Locas, (or inhabitants of the zodiac,) and there became the constellation of Mula. In her hand is a pure fan made of the tails of lions; she constantly fans Sheshi-Rupi-Hari (or Veeshnu with the countenance of Lunus).

The handle of the fan is embellished with gold; in the fan are eleven stars. She is the wife of Chandra; she is young, of a dark complexion, and irresistable are her charms.

N. B. The stars of the fan are γ, ϵ, δ, ζ, φ, τ, σ, ν, o, ξ, π, of the Sagittary.

LITERAL TRANSLATION OF A HYMN TO CREESHNA, OR THE SUN, FROM AN ANCIENT IRISH MANUSCRIPT.

Be auspicious to my lays, O Creas, thou only god of the seven heavens, who swayest the universe through the immensity of space and matter. O universal brilliant sun! O universal and resplendent orb! Thou mighty governor of the heavens; thou sovereign regulator of the connected whole; thou sole and universal deity of mankind; thou gracious and supreme deity, my noblest and most happy inspiration is the praise of thy glory. Thy power I will praise, for thou art my sovereign lord, whose bright image continually forces itself on my attentive eager imagination. Thou art the being to whom heroes pray in peril of war, nor are their supplications vain when thus they pray, whether it be when thou illuminest the eastern region with thy orient light, when in thy meridian splendour, or when thou majestically descendest in the west.

REMARKS BY THE TRANSLATOR, GENERAL VALANCEY.

In this poem we find Creas without an adjunct, and it is often written Creasan, Creasna, Crusin, Crusna. There are many high places so named, and others called *Grian*, another name of the sun. In some poems I find Nion-Crios, explained by Mac Greine; that is, the son of the sun, and probably this will explain the name of an Egyptian king, Nuncoreus, mentioned by Pliny. Plutarch tells us,

Cyrus, king of Persia, was so named from Cores, the sun. We have many families in Ireland named Mac Greine, whose ancestors, without doubt, traced their origin to the CHILDREN OF THE SUN; as we are informed the Indian Rajahs do at this day. We read, also, of the superiority of the Clanna Bhiosena, or children of Veeshnu, who are certainly the priests of that deity.

The ancient heathen deities of the pagan Irish Criosan, Biosena, and Seeva, or Sheeva, are doubtless the Creeshna, Veeshnu, Brahma, and Seeva, of the Hindoos.

They had a deity named Caili. The altars on which they sacrificed to her are at this day named Leaba Caili, or the bed of Caili; this must have been the Cali of the Hindoos.

The Irish deity Neit corresponds to the Hindoo Naut.

—	Saman	——	Samanaut.
—	Bud	——	Bood.
—	Cann	——	Chandra.
—	Omh, i. e. *he who is*,		Om, or Aum.
— And	Esar	——	Eswara.

CHAPTER IV.

Concerning the Invasion of India by SEMIRAMIS, *Queen of* ASSYRIA, *as detailed by classical Writers; with introductory Remarks relative to the History of that ancient Empire and* PERSIA, *as given in the* POORAUNS.

I Shall commence this chapter on the invasion of India by Semiramis, queen of Babylon, in a similar manner with those on the incursions by the sovereigns of ancient Egypt, with a few concise observations, founded on Sanscreet documents, relative to the origin of that monarchy, so intimately connected with India. The Pooraums, we see, evidently prove its superiority in point of antiquity to the latter, since it was after the destruction of the first Padma-mandira, or sacred pyramidal temple, erected on the Cumudvati, which, in Mr. Wilford's opinion, was the tower of Babel on the Euphrates, (in other words, after the confusion of languages and the dispersion,) that those on the Nile were erected to the goddess on the lotos, that innocent allegory of the more virtuous among Noah's descendants, for the spirit that brooded on the primordial waters. This is another interesting proof of the truth of the Mosaic statements. Whether these Padma-mandiras were the pyramids or not is of little consequence: the massy pyramidal mode of erecting them was conformable to Cuthite rites and customs, and the mythology, though corrupted, bore the Mosaic stamp. I am in the present, as in former instances, inclined to assign the oldest possible date to the Chaldæan empire, and for fully admitting the test adverted to before as the truest criterion of that antiquity, the account of the astronomical observations reaching back to a period of 1903 before Christ, recorded by Porphyry to have been sent by Calisthenes from Babylon to

Aristotle* at the time of Alexander's conquest of that city. That sum, we have observed, added to the intervening 330 years between that conqueror and Christ, makes exactly 2233, another remarkable coincidence with the Mosaic writings. Neither religion nor the sciences can flourish till empires are formed, and adequate protection can be afforded. I consider, therefore, that empire as thus early formed, and that protection as thus early extended, to the predecessors of Berosus in the superb temple of Belus, and, with the chronologers Petavius and Jackson, am induced to fix the age of Semiramis (whom I consider as a *real* and not a *fictitious* character) about 1964 years before Christ. The early date here assigned to that science will not appear incredible when it is recollected, that, in a passage of Eusebius, preserved by Josephus, that writer states Abraham to have taught astronomy in Chaldæa some ages before this period.† But let us take a cursory retrospect of the history of a country which may be called the mother of India, since from it the great Bali, early emigrating in an eastern direction, established the first dynasty of native sovereigns on the banks of the Ganges.

After the departure of Cush and his followers for Egypt and the countries nearer the RISING SUN, the splendid object of their idolatry, Nimrod, his youngest son, established himself in that empire; and, by the Sanscreet name of NIRMARYADA occurring among the ancient tyrannical sovereigns of Misra-Sthan, as previously noticed, it should seem as if his empire included even that remote region. Besides Babel, his capital, the Hebrew writer affirms Nimrod to have built three other cities, the first of which is termed ERECK, a name which, according to Dr. Hyde, (a not less excellent Oriental geographer than astronomer,) may be yet traced in that part of Assyria at present denominated by the Arabian writers the Babylonian IRAK,

* Simplicii Comment. in Aristot. de Cælo, p. 123.

† Antiq. Jud. lib. i. cap. 7, μετα δε τον κατακλυσμον δεκατη γενεα, *in the tenth race after the flood.*

or ERAK. Of the immediate successors of Nimrod and his son Belus (that Belus who emigrated to India) on the Babylonian throne, history has recorded only the names and the number, which is six, and may be seen in Syncellus.* The hordes of Arabia Petræa, who must also have been Cuthites, for Cush is the Oriental name of that country, afterwards rushed in upon the cultivated territories of Babylonia, and, subjugating the country, that dynasty became extinct. Their names, but not their history, are also enumerated in Syncellus. After their extinction, the name and empire of Babylonia became absorbed in that of Assyria, of which Ninus, the founder of Nineveh, and husband of Semiramis, was the first sovereign on record. The above is the history of the most ancient Babylonian sovereigns, as given by Diodorus Siculus from Ctesias, and their reigns are said to have taken up a period of 440 years; but it must be owned that both their reigns and the extended period of them are considered as very doubtful points by the best modern historians and chronologers, who are more generally inclined to consider Ninus, above-mentioned, as the immediate progeny of Belus, the son and successor of Nimrod. If, however, they are to be admitted into the serious page of history, the period of their reigns must be considerably abbreviated, since the æra which we have above fixed upon for that of Semiramis is the one most consonant to probability and the general current of ancient events.

The result of this inquiry is, that about the nineteenth century before Christ, Semiramis, queen of Assyria, having, by the death of Ninus, her husband, succeeded to the sole sovereignty of the vast empire which his arms and valour had acquired, undertook her celebrated expedition into India, an expedition which, from the romantic circumstances recorded to have attended it, has been frequently ranked among the grossest fables of antiquity, but to

* Syncelli Chronograph. p. 90.

the general truth of which the annals of India recently investigated bear unequivocal testimony.

But the ancient annals and history of India also bear witness to the truth of a most important fact, which is proper to be detailed before we enter on the immediate actions of Semiramis, since it not only opens a new view of the subject, but, in some degree, accounts for the restless ambition, in the first place, of the Assyrian, and, in the second, of the Persian, monarchs, their successors, to subjugate the envied nation emigrated beyond the Indus.

In his essay on the ancient Persians, Sir William Jones relates a discovery which he had recently made concerning the primæval sovereigns of this region of Asia, for which he was first indebted to MIR MOHAMMED HUSAIN, one of the most intelligent Mussulmen in India, a discourse which cast a gleam of light not only on the primæval history of Iran, but of the human race themselves in the earliest ages. By his means he obtained a sight of an invaluable work called the DABISTAN, composed, from authentic Persian records, by Mohsan Fani, a native of Cashmere, containing the important information "that a powerful monarchy had been established for ages in Iran before the accession of CAYUMERS, that it was called the Mahabadian dynasty, and that many princes, of whom seven or eight only are named in the Dabistan, and among them MAHBUL, or MAHA BELI, had raised their empire to the zenith of human glory." If this evidence, which to him appeared unexceptionable, can be relied on, the Iranian monarchy must have been the oldest in the world.

In examining the truth of this novel and wonderful intelligence, our author set about comparing the oldest dialects of the Persian and Sanscreet lauguages, and, on minute examination, with confidence declared to the Asiatic Society, "that hundreds of Parsi nouns are pure Sanscreet, with no other change than such as may be observed in the numerous vernacular dialects of India, that very many imperatives are the roots of Sanscreet verbs, and that even the moods and

tenses of the Persian verb-substantive, which is the model of all the rest, are deducible from the Sanscreet by an easy and clear analogy. On perusing the Zend glossary, presented to the public by M. Anquetil in his famous ZENDAVESTA, he was inexpressibly surprised to find that six or seven words in ten were pure Sanscreet, and even some of their inflexions formed by the rules of the Sanscreet grammar. Now," he observes, "M. ANQUETIL most certainly, and the Persian compiler most probably, had no knowledge of Sanscreet, and could not, therefore, have invented a list of Sanscreet words; it is, therefore, an authentic list of Zend words which had been preserved in books or by tradition; and it follows that the language of the Zend was at least a dialect of the Sanscreet, approaching perhaps as nearly to it as the Pracreet, or other popular idioms, which is known to have been spoken in India two thousand years ago.

"If, however, it may be urged, a nation of Hindoos ever possessed or governed the country of Iran, we ought to find in the very ancient ruins of the temple or palace, now called the THRONE OF JEMSHID, some inscriptions in Devanagari, or at least in the characters on the stones at Elephanta, where the sculpture is unquestionably Indian, or in those on the STAFF of FIRUZ SHAH, which exist in the heart of India; and such inscriptions we probably should have found if that edifice had not been erected after the migration of the Brahmins from Iran, and the violent schism in the Persian religion, of which we shall presently speak; for, although the popular name of the building at Istakhr, or Persepolis, be no certain proof that it was raised in the time of JEMSHID, yet such a fact might easily have been preserved by tradition, and we shall soon have abundant evidence that the temple was posterior to the reign of the Hindoo monarchs."

Another proof he finds in the primitive religion of Persia previous to the Sabian superstition having been perfectly pure and patriarchal; but he subjoins, "a system of devotion so pure and sublime could

hardly, among mortals, be of long duration; and we learn from the Dabistan, that the popular worship of the Iranians, under HUSHANG, was purely Sabian, a word of which I cannot offer any certain etymology, but which has been deduced by grammarians from *Saba, a host*, and particularly the *host of heaven*, or the *celestial bodies*, in the adoration of which the Sabian ritual is believed to have consisted. There is a description in the learned work just mentioned of the several Persian temples dedicated to the sun and planets, of the images adored in them, and of the magnificent processions to them on prescribed festivals, one of which is probably represented by sculpture in the ruined city of JEMSHID. But the planetary worship in Persia seems only a part of a far more complicated religion which we now find in these Indian provinces; for, MOHSAN assures us, that, in the opinion of the best informed Persians who professed the faith of HUSHANG, distinguished from that of ZERATUSHT, the first monarch of Iran and of the whole earth was MAHABAD, a word apparently Sanscreet, who divided the people into four orders, the *religious*, the *military*, the *commercial*, and the *servile*, to which he assigned names unquestionably the same in their origin with those now applied to the four primary classes of the Hindoos. They added, that he received from the Creator, and promulgated among men, a sacred book in a heavenly language, to which the Mussulman author gives the Arabic title of Desatir, or Regulations, but the original name of which he has not mentioned, and that fourteen MAHABADS had appeared, or would appear, in human shapes for the government of this world. Now, when we know that the Hindoos believe in fourteen MENUS, or celestial personages with similar functions, the first of whom left a book of *Regulations*, or *Divine Ordinances*, which they hold equal to the Veda, and the language of which they believe to be that of the gods, we can hardly doubt that the first corruption of the purest and oldest religion was the system of Indian theology invented by the Brahmins, and prevalent in those territories where the book of MAHABAD, or MENU, is at this

hour the standard of all religious and moral duties. The accession of CAYUMERS to the throne of Persia seems to have been accompanied by a considerable revolution both in government and religion. He was most probably of a different race from the Mahabadians, who preceded him, and began, perhaps, the new system of national faith which HUSHANG, whose name it bears, completed." Sir William concludes with expressing his firm conviction, "that the religion of the Brahmins prevailed in Persia before the accession of CAYUMERS, whom the Parsi's, from respect to his memory, consider as the first of men, although they believe in an universal deluge before his reign."*

From the above authentic statement, it appears that the Indians, or, at least, a great part of the nation, being originally emigrated Iranians, were, in some degree, considered by the Assyrian sovereigns subjects revolted from their power; and this circumstance accounts for those repeated attacks made upon them by those sovereigns in every æra of that ancient empire. It does not appear, however, that they ever penetrated far beyond the Western frontier and the Panjab; at least it is evident, from the whole tenour of the account, that the scene of the exploits of the first celebrated invader Semiramis was the region bordering on the Indus. Of that invasion the following are the particulars transmitted by the classics, and asserted by Diodorus to be extracted by Ctesias from the archives of Babylon.

The vast empire of Assyria, recorded at that period to have extended from the Persian Gulf to the banks of the Tanaïs, and from the Indus to the Nile, being in profound peace, that vain-glorious princess turned her restless and ambitious thoughts towards the conquest of a country distinguished by its immense wealth, unequalled beauty, and luxurious fertility of soil. Her preparations were, on all occasions, as formidable as her designs were grand and comprehen-

* Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 61.

sive, and she, who erected the towers of haughty Babylon from the dust, deemed it not impossible to level the loftiest cities of India. For three years, we are informed, the army appropriated for the intended irruption was forming, and the bravest and most expert soldiers, from all the provinces subject to Assyria, were enrolled in its number. They were to assemble by a certain fixed period in the kingdom of Bactria, and thence to descend, like a tempest that sweeps all before it, on the devoted country beyond the Indus.*

Semiramis had heard that the chief superiority of the Indians in any land-engagement lay in their elephants; they boasted that to produce those animals was the peculiar privilege of their own country, and thought themselves invincible whilst they had such formidable champions, at once to defend themselves and spread destruction through the ranks of the enemy. To destroy this source of confidence, she is said to have ordered a certain number of counterfeit elephants to be formed out of the skins of beasts curiously sewed together, and stuffed out in such a manner as to resemble the form of that unweildy animal. These enormous fabrics were placed on the backs of camels, and had each a particular attendant allotted as its conductor, after the manner of real elephants.

As the Indus was to be passed, and the passage might be disputed, her maritime preparations are represented as not less powerful than those by land. She collected, therefore, from all parts those who were skilled in the construction of vessels proper for the transportation of her innumerable forces over that river, and artificers from Phœnicia, Cyprus, and all the sea-ports bordering on her Syrian dominions, awed by her menaces, or allured by her bounty, flocked to her capital. In the mean time whole forests were cut down to facilitate the project. Such expedition was used in the execution of her commands, that, in the third year from their commencement, these mighty efforts being completed, the immense army of the As-

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii. p. 90, et seq.

syrians assembled on the frontiers of Bactria towards India, while their naval armament darkened all the western shores of the adjoining Indus.

Staurobates is said, by the Greek writers, to have been at that period the reigning monarch of India, and, consistently with the native accounts, he must have been of the dynasty of the Suryabans, or race of the sun, who sat on the throne during the first ages of the Cali Yug.

According to Sir William Jones's chronological arrangement of the ancient sovereigns of India, he ought to be one of the immediate successors of Nandiverdhana, the fifth emperor of the Magadha, or Bahar, dynasty, and probably was one of the four nameless sovereigns whose reigns amount to the 138 years necessary to complete the sum of those that form the dynasty in question.*

Staurobates, undaunted by the menaces of Semiramis, and unmoved at the report of her formidable preparations, which seemed to threaten no less than the entire destruction of his empire, prepared with equal vigour to defend himself against the incroachment of a foe, provoked by no insults, and inflamed by no wrongs, but urged only by the blind fury of ambition to attempt the subversion of the ancient throne of India. To ward off the expected blow, it became necessary that the whole resources of the empire should be called forth, and all the forces it contained should be brought into immediate action. An army, far superior in number even to that of the Assyrian queen, was in a short time collected, and every arm able to draw the bow or launch the javelin was extended in its defence. A more numerous train of elephants than had ever yet assembled on her plains, and decorated with every dreadful apparatus of offensive war that could impress an enemy with terror, was brought together to support this immense army, and to crush the enemy advancing in vain confidence of victory. But the urgency of so critical a situation required not on-

* See the enumeration of the Bahar sovereigns of Hindostan in p. 68 preceding.

ly the most strenuous exertions by land, a marine, proportionably numerous, was likewise indispensably necessary to the salvation of the empire. To obtain this additional security, 4,000 barks were, with all expedition, constructed out of those large bamboo canes with which the Indian rivers abound, and which are neither subject to rot or be eaten of the worm. These strongly compacted together formed vessels equally calculated for swiftness and security. In these vessels, without delay, a considerable body of the Indian forces embarked, and waited in order and silence the approach of the Assyrians.

If any credit can be given to the exaggerated account of Suidas, the army of Semiramis consisted, on this celebrated expedition, of above 4,000,000 of infantry and cavalry, 100,000 chariots armed with scythes, 200,000 camels for various uses, and 3,000 vessels.* The appointed general of this vast force was Dercetæus; although the queen herself, when she arrived near the scene of action, took the command, and marched in person at the head of her forces. When this vast train arrived at the banks of the Indus, and Semiramis observed the enemy's fleet arranged along the opposite shore, she gave orders for the immediate launching of the vessels she had constructed, and manned them with the most determined and experienced soldiers in her army. The shock is recorded to have been terrible, and the battle, for a long time, was obstinately maintained on both sides, but the greater experience in naval concerns of the Phœnicians and other maritime adventurers, who attended the Assyrian army, and who had been judiciously blended with the troops, gave, at length, a decided superiority to her fleet, and victory declared for the invaders. Above a thousand of the Indian vessels were sunk, and an immense multitude taken prisoners. The triumph of victory added new fury to the wild and boundless ambition which goaded the mind of Semiramis. She commanded her generals to let loose their fury upon the frontiers of the invaded country. The whole coast of the Indus was desolated

* See Suidas on the word Semiramis.

for many leagues, and many rich and noble cities in its neighbourhood were first plundered and then levelled with the ground.

The wary Indian monarch, although discomfited, disdained to despond under the difficulty that involved him; but, rallying his forces, retired to some distance from the Indus, and, drawing up his troops in order of battle, invited the exulting enemy to renew the engagement by land. Semiramis, mistaking this politic and cautious retreat for precipitate flight, immediately ordered a bridge of boats to be constructed and extended quite across that wide and turbulent stream, on which, with her whole army, she prepared to pass with all the arrogance of a conqueror. Having arrived in safety on the eastern shore, and appointed a guard of 60,000 men to defend the bridge, she hastened with far more celerity than prudence to the field of battle, disposing her counterfeit elephants in front to intimidate the enemy, who, at the sight of them, was seized with equal wonder and consternation. That wonder, however, was turned into just contempt, and that consternation into shouts of triumph, when, by some deserters from the Assyrians, they were informed, that the objects of their astonishment were only the artificial fabrication of the martial genius of Semiramis, and that the war-elephant still remained the peculiar and unrivalled appendage of an Indian army. To remove every apprehension on that head, heralds were commanded, by sound of trumpet, publicly to proclaim this intelligence throughout the camp; and the van of either army now meeting, commenced the important conflict that was to decide the fate of India.

At the first onset a circumstance occurred which greatly contributed to keep alive the ardour of the Assyrians, and inspire them with the strongest hopes of a decisive victory. The advanced legions of the Indian army consisted of cavalry and armed chariots, and the horses, to whom elephants were no novel objects, rushed on to the conflict with dreadful impetuosity; but, when they approached nearer the line of those pretended animals, the strong and offensive odour emitted by the hides so terrified and scared them, that they were im-

mediately thrown into the utmost disorder: the greater part threw their riders to the ground, or hurried them amazed and nerveless into the very centre of the Assyrian army. The active exploring eye of Semiramis, who was on fire to finish the undertaking she had so successfully begun, soon discovered the disaster, and that intrepid princess, instantly placing herself at the head of a select body of her bravest veterans, rushed upon the disordered ranks of those advanced legions, effected their complete overthrow, and drove them back to the main body of the Indians. Staurobates, unable to account for this fresh malady, was equally confounded and astonished, but, quickly recovering from his confusion, exerted himself with resolution proportioned to the emergency, and moved forward with that vast body of infantry which composed the centre. The elephants followed after in an immense train, and, in a short time, both armies were completely and in every part engaged. Than such an engagement, if imagination has not had too great a share in its formation, nothing can be conceived more terrible and sanguinary; whether we consider the number of the contending armies, or the magnitude of the prize for which they separately fought. In fact, we are told, that the shock was beyond description violent, that the action was long and obstinate, and the carnage terrible, as well from the number as ferocity of the real elephants in the Indian army, who, raging through the field, spread havoc and dismay among the ranks of the enemy, while their monstrous and inanimate representatives, on the contrary, served only to encumber the Assyrian army and impede its motions. Harassed by the resolute assaults of the Indians on the one hand, and trampled by the enraged elephants on the other, the fortitude of the Assyrians at length gave way, and they were pursued with great slaughter from the field to the banks of the Indus. Towards the close of the engagement, the monarch of India and the empress of Assyria met, and a personal combat ensued between these mighty competitors for fame and empire. Conspicuous throughout the day on an elephant of uncommon magnitude,

the former had fulfilled every duty of an active and wise commander; and the latter had fought with that romantic spirit of heroism which distinguished every action of her life. She now hoped to bring the important point in debate to a speedy conclusion, and, by the death of Staurobates, obtain the summit of her wishes. All her efforts, however, were ineffectual; nor was she fortunate enough to make her royal antagonist feel the force of any weapon, hurled by her arm. Staurobates, on the contrary, twice wounded the female invader of his realm; the first time with an arrow that grazed her arm, and the second time with a javelin that pierced her shoulder. Stung with the agony of her wounds, but still more deeply galled by the rout of her army, whom she beheld flying on every side from the field in the utmost disorder and confusion, the distracted queen now turned the head of her horse towards the Indus, and arrived in time to superintend the disgraceful passage of her squadrons over that river on which they had so lately been triumphant. The passage, however, was not accomplished but with considerable hazard and with the loss of the greater part of her remaining forces; for, so hot was the pursuit of the Indians, that, to avoid their fury, thousands plunged into the stream, and were drowned; while thousands more were trampled down in the hurry of tumultuous debarkation, and received a far less honourable death than their companions who died bravely fighting in the field of battle. The enraged Semiramis now prepared to take a severe revenge for the defeat of her troops. Observing that the gross of her army had gained the shore, and that the Indians continued to pursue them over the bridge which she had constructed, she commanded that bridge to be suddenly cut down, by which an immense multitude of Indians were instantly ingulphed, while others were hurried down that rapid stream, or dashed to pieces on its rocky banks.—This is the substance of what Diodorus Siculus hath handed down to us on the authority of Ctesias. Other writers of antiquity represent the sequel as still more fatal; for, we are informed by some that she perished in the expedition;

and, by others, that she made her escape with only twenty persons in her retinue.*

On the whole of this piece of history, it may be remarked, that, though there can scarcely be a doubt of there having lived, in the early ages of the Assyrian empire, such a person as Semiramis, (for, some authors, as we have seen above, have even doubted her existence,) yet, that she ever performed such wonderful feats as are ascribed to her, or in person led even an army into India, much more an army of such astonishing magnitude, in that infant state of the world, is a circumstance in the highest degree suspicious. Sir Walter Raleigh,† on this subject, has very properly observed, no one place on earth could possibly have nourished so vast a concourse of living creatures as, on this occasion, are said to have assembled in Bactria, "had every man and beast but fed on grass." And the remark of a later writer,‡ on the million which Xerxes is said to have conducted out of Persia into Greece, is pointedly applicable to the imaginary myriads of Semiramis; that the destruction of so mighty a host must have convulsed the whole of Asia; that "numerous as the sands of the shore" is an expression which, at all times, has been used by Oriental writers in regard to defeated armies; and that the source of these misrepresentations exists in the exaggerating fancy of poets, in the insatiable pride and exorbitant ambition of princes, and in the servile adulation of their biographers.

I have already observed, that, from the romantic nature of her exploits and the exaggeration of her historians, the whole history of Semiramis and her triumphs has, by many judicious historians and critics, been considered as fabulous. Mr. Bryant contends, that no such persons ever existed as Ninus and Semiramis; that, by the for-

* Consult Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 107; and Strabo, lib. x. p. 745.

† See Raleigh's History of the World, p. 125.

‡ Mr. Richardson's Dissertation on Eastern Manners, &c. p. 54, oct. edit.

mer, we must understand the Ninevites collectively; and, by the latter, a people called Samarin, from their insigne, which was a dove, expressed Semaramas. He is of opinion, that the actions of a whole dynasty have been ascribed to two individuals; for, he admits that those people conquered the Medes and Bactrians; extending their dominions westward as far as Phrygia and the river Tanais, and southward as far as Arabia and Egypt. Under them, also, he contends, the kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon were united; and that this union of the two empires is allegorically termed the marriage of Ninus and Semiramis.

Then it was, our learned and sagacious author adds, that the Samarim performed the great works attributed to them. For, exclusive of what was done at Babylon, which they built, "there are," says Strabo, i. 16, "almost over the face of the whole earth, vast mounds of earth, and walls, and ramparts, attributed to Semiramis; and in these are subterraneous passages of communication, and tanks for water, and stair-cases of stone. There are also vast canals to divert the course of rivers, and lakes to receive them; together with highways and bridges of a wonderful structure." They built the famous terraces at Babylon; and those beautiful gardens at Ecbatana, after that city had fallen into their hands. They found out the art of weaving cotton; which discovery has been given to those of their family who went into Egypt; for, there were Samarim there too. The Samarim of Egypt and Babylonia were of the same family, the sons of Chus.

Although some historians have represented Semiramis as a woman, and a great princess, who reigned in Babylon, yet others, of better intelligence, have mentioned her as a deity. "She was," says Athenagoras, "esteemed the daughter of Dercetus, and the same as the Suria dea." Semiramis was said to have been changed into a dove; because they found her always depicted and worshipped under that form. Among the Assyrians, the dove was particularly held in veneration; *διο και τους Ασσυριους την περιςεραν τιμᾳν ὡς θεαν*. Hence it

seems plain, that Semiramis was an emblem; and that the name was a compound of Sama-Ramas, or Ramis. It signified the *divine token, the type of Providence.* As a military ensign, it may, with some latitude, be interpreted *the standard of the Most High.* It consisted of the figure of a dove, which was probably encircled with the Iris, as those two emblems were often represented together.

One of the gates of Babylon was called the gate of Semiramis, undoubtedly from having the sacred emblem of Sama-Ramis, or the dove, engraved over it. Probably the lofty obelisk of Semiramis, mentioned by Diodorus, was named from the same hieroglyphic. The Cuthites settled about Cochin and Madura, in India; and the great kings of Calecut were styled Samarim even in later times, when those countries were visited by the Portuguese and English.

The image of the Suria dea was richly habited, and upon its head was a golden dove. What is very remarkable, the image was by the people called Σημηϊον. Lucian takes pains to inform us, that this was not a Grecian but a Syriac word, a term made use of by the natives. He writes in the Ionic dialect; and what he calls Σημηϊον was by the people expressed Sema-Ion, or Sama-Ion, *the token of the dove, the emblem of the Arkite Iönah.*

According to Hesychius and others, by Semiramis was particularly signified a wild pigeon; and there is reason to think, that this intelligence was derived from some ancient tradition: and that Noah did send out of the ark a dove of the wild species; for, a tame one would have returned upon the least difficulty, perhaps of choice; a wild one would not, but through necessity. Such a return plainly indicated, that the earth was not yet habitable, and afforded the intelligence required.*

A very considerable portion of what Mr. Bryant has thus sagaciously conjectured has been confirmed, by Mr. Wilford, in the fourth volume of the Asiatic Researches, which has recently come

* Analysis, vol. ii. p. 97.

to my hands, and in which I am happy to find an express dissertation on the subject of Semiramis, abundantly demonstrating the existence of that personage, and at the remote period which I have assigned to her. It is, as usual, deeply, and almost inextricably, blended with their mythology; and Seeva and Parvati are again brought forward to act their parts on the historic drama. As far as it is possible to analyze the story, that analysis is here submitted to the candid reader: it must be read, like most of the foregoing matter, as a legend founded on the basis of historic truth!

To every exalted personage, in Asiatic antiquity, mentioned in Hindoo books, a divine origin is invariably assigned. It is an appearance of Veeshnu or Mahadeva. It is an emanation of the almighty power, manifest, for important purposes, among mortals. In truth, Ninus and Semiramis are those two deities, under a different name, but not form; for, it is most remarkable, *that form is a dove.* On some disgust, taken by Parvati, at the licentious amours of the *generative god*, she left Kilass, his celestial palace, and went and took up her abode in Cusha-Dweepa. The penitent god pursued in vain. To arm herself with direr power of vengeance, she practised severe austerities in Vahni-Sthan, a mountainous district of that kingdom, for nine years. A fire sprang from the head of the incensed goddess, which was nearly proving fatal to that whole region; and men and animals fled from it with precipitation. Unwilling to injure animated nature, she repressed the rage of the fire, and confined it to the SAMA-TREE, where she thenceforth fixed her abode. That tree she made the place of her dalliance. Thence she was denominated Sami-Rama, or *she who dallies in the Sama-tree.* It is still thought to retain the sacred fire; and Pooja is even yet performed, at certain seasons, in India, to SAMI-RAMA and the SAMA-TREE, round whose fires the Devatas exult.*

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 364.

Mahadeva, soon after assuming the form of a dove, (a form certainly not the least proper to regain his consort's alienated affection,) accomplished his end; and she herself, also, being transformed into the same bird, they travelled round the world together. With the fire that issued from them, the result of intense devotion, they consumed the long grass that had overspread the earth, (that is, cleared it of the obstacles of culture,) and with it the impure tribes, *Mileechas* and *Yavanas*, or bands of infidels and robbers, who were accustomed to conceal their spoils under the covert of that long grass, were also destroyed in the general conflagration: a very intelligible fiction concerning the triumphs of Ninus and Semiramis in their attempts to civilize the first savage race of men. At their command, the clouds, pouring down water, quenched the conflagration, and left a country proper to be inhabited by the *four great tribes*, who rushed, on every side, into Cusha-Dweepa, and who soon formed a powerful and wealthy nation. After the conflagration, it is added, all sorts of metals and precious stones were discovered; which seems to prove, that the Indians believe what was asserted in our former volumes, that their first discovery was owing to the burning of vast forests, or to volcanic eruptions, melting the strata near the surface of the earth.

The four tribes, however, soon deviated from the paths of rectitude, and became like Mileechas; while the Yavanas re-entered Cusha-Dweepa, spoiling and ravaging the whole country. They complained to Sami-Rama, who came and resided among them; while Mahadeva received the addresses of the pious at Mochsa-Sthan, or Mecca, in Arabia, whence, in the Pooraυns, he is styled Mocsh-Eswara. Among the pious, who came thither, was a prince named Virasena, to whom, after a long series of ardent devotions, (without which, no boon from heaven can be obtained in India,) Mahadeva appeared, and, in reward, constituted him king over Sthavaras, or the immoveable part of the creation,

whence he was called STHAVARAPATI, written, by the Greeks, Staurabates; and the hills, trees, plants, and grasses, of every kind, (that is, in fact, all the world,) were ordered to obey him. His native country was near the sea, probably the regions adjoining the Indus; and he began his reign with repressing the wicked, and insisting on all his subjects walking in the paths of justice and rectitude. In order to make his sovereignty acknowledged through all the earth, he put himself at the head of a numerous army; and, directing his course towards the south, he arrived at Mochsa-Sthan, where he performed rites in honour of Mocsh-Eswara, according to the rites prescribed in the sacred books. From Mocshesha, he advanced towards the Agni-Parvatas, or fire-mountains, in Vahnisthan (Bactria perhaps); but they refused to meet him with presents, and to pay tribute to him. Incensed at their insolence, Sthavar-Pati resolved to destroy them. The officers on the part of Sami-Rama, the sovereign of Vahnisthan, assembled all their troops, and met the army of Sthavar-Pati; but, after a bloody conflict, they were put to flight. Sami-Rama, amazed, inquired who this new conqueror was; and soon reflected, that he never could have prevailed against her without a boon from Mahadeva, obtained by the means of what, in India, is called Ugra-Tapasya, or a Tapasya performed with intense fervour. She, therefore, had a conference with Sthavar-Pati; and, as he was now, through his Tapasya, become a son of Mahadeva, she told him she considered him in that light, and would allow him to command over all the hills, trees, and plants, in Vahnisthan. The hills then humbled themselves before Sthavar-Pati, and paid tribute to him.*

In this account, under a deep veil of mythology, we have the history of the contest for empire between Semiramis and Staurabates; with this difference, that the latter here is the ag-

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 365.

gressor, in the first instance, and still the victor in the last. It is not only in the similarity of the name, but in other circumstances of her history, that we discover the identity of person between Sami-Rama and Semiramis; for, Semiramis is said, by Diodorus Siculus, to have been born at Ascalon; and the Pooraunz affirm, that the first appearance of Sami-Rama, in Syria, was at Aschalana-Sthan.* Semiramis, we have seen, is represented, by the classical writers, as having been fed by doves in a desert, and retiring from earth in the form of a dove. According to the Pooraunz, Capatesi, or the dove, was but a manifestation of Sami-Rama. It was equally the warlike insignia of Assyria, and the emblem of peace and harmony. One of the names of this Syrian goddess, or deified princess, is MAHA-BHAGA, or the prosperous goddess, which is no other than the name of Hierapolis, where stood her temple. The Syrian name of Mabag is an evident contraction of that term. There is, also, in the same learned essay, a romantic story concerning the origin of Ninus, under the name of Lilesa, but not sufficiently decent for the eye of an European reader. The characteristic circumstances perfectly correspond: he is said to have conquered the universe; to have been married to Sami-Rama; and both to have passed their lives in a series of voluptuous pleasures.† Many Babylonian names are, in this essay, traced to a Sanscreet source. Ninus, the Assyrian, who built Ninevoh, is, properly, Ninus-Eswara, *i. e.* Ninus, the lord, or sovereign. The Syrian appellative of Mylitta, applied to Semiramis, is, in Sanscreet, Militia-Devi, or, because she brings people together, *connuba:* Nimrod, from Nima-Rudra, because Rudra gave him half his strength: Vahnisthan means the same as Agnisthan, the region of fire; it is properly Azar-Bijian, in Sanscreet, the *spring of fire.* —To conclude this article of Semiramis: her festival is still observed, in India, on

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 365.   † Ibid.

the tenth day of the lunar month of Aswina, or about the fourth of October. It is a festival of lamps lighted under the Sama-tree; rice, flowers, and, sometimes, strong liquors, are the offerings. The praise of Sama-Rama-Devi is sung; and herself and her favourite tree receive the adorations of the transported multitude.

Before we quit Semiramis, since the literary world has recently been agitated by disputes concerning the *war of Troy*, it may be useful to state, that the colony of Trojans, who settled in Egypt, according to the Pooraums, were brought thither by this princess; and the following very curious legend, translated by Mr. Wilford, may possibly induce the reader to suspect, that there never was any other Troja than that of Egypt; for, in it are apparently traced the outlines of the bolder legend of Homer.

"The author of the Visva-Pracas gives an account of an extraordinary personage, named DARDANASA, who was lineally descended from the great JAMADAGNI. His father, ABHAYANAS, lived on the banks of the river Vitasta; where he constantly performed acts of devotion, explained the Vedas to a multitude of pupils, and was chosen by CHITRARATHA, who, though a Vaisya, (or one of the third class,) reigned in that country, as his *guru*, or spiritual guide. Young DARDANASA had free access to the secret apartments of the palace, where the daughter of the king became *enamoured of him, and eloped with him* through fear of detection, carrying away all the jewels and other wealth that she could collect. The lovers travelled from hill to hill, and from forest to forest, until they reached the banks of the *Cali*, in Egypt, where their property secured them a happy retreat. PRAMODA, a virtuous and learned Brahmin of that country, had a beautiful daughter, named PRAMADA, whom DARDANASA, with the assent of the princess, *took by the hand*, that is *married*, according to the rites prescribed in the Vedas; and his amiable qualities gained him so many adherents, that he was at length chosen sovereign of the whole region, which he governed with mildness and wisdom.

"The river, here named Vitasta, and vulgarly Jelam, is the Hydaspes of the Greeks: a nation who lived on its banks are called Dardaneis by DIONYSIUS;* and the Grecian DARDANUS was probably the same with DARDANASA, who travelled into Egypt with many associates. We find a race of Trojans in Egypt: a mountain, called anciently Troicus, and now Tora, fronted Memphis; and, at the foot of it, was a place actually named Troja, near the Nile, supposed to have been an old settlement of Trojans, who had fled from the forces of Menelaus. But CTESIAS, who is rather blameable for credulity than for want of veracity, and most of whose fables are to be found in the Pooraùns, was of a different opinion; for, he asserted, according to Diodorus of Sicily, that Troja, in Egypt, was built by Trojans, who had come from Assyria under the famed SEMIRAMIS,† named SAMI-RAMA by the ancient Hindoo writers. And this account is confirmed by Herodotus, who says, that a race of DARDANIANS were settled on the banks of the river Gyndes, near the Tigris;‡ where, I imagine, DARDANASA and his associates first established themselves after their departure from India.|| EUSTATHIUS, in his comment on the Periegesis, distinguishes the Dardaneis from the Dardanoi, making the first an Indian, and the second a Trojan, race;§ but it seems probable, that both races had a common origin. When Homer gives the Trojans the title of Meropians, he alludes to their Eastern origin, from the borders of Meru; the very name of King MEROPS being no other than MERUPA, or sovereign of that mountainous region."

Such a multitude of legends, nearly consonant with the Grecian fables, are discovered in the Pooraùns, as incontestably prove, that, through the medium of Egypt, the Sanscreet sages of Greece, during their travels in the former country, or their residence in the colleges of the Thebais, must have gained a sight of the sacred volumes, which

* Perieg. v. 11, 38. † B. ii. ‡ B. i. c. 189. || Iliad, Y. v. 215.

§ Οἱ Δαρδανεῖς, Ἰνδικὸν ἔθνος, οἱ μέντοι Δάρδανοι, Τρωϊκόν. —*Eustath.* on *Dionys.* v. 11, 38.

record them; for, the farther I advance, the more necessary I still find it to adhere to the maxim on which I originally set out, as a sort of basis for future argument; that, of two nations, professing a system of mythology in its great outlines intimately corresponding, *the elder has an undoubted right to the palm of originality.*

CHAPTER V.

Of the Invasion of India by Sesostris, King of Egypt.

THE character and history of Sesostris are involved in obscurity scarcely less penetrable than that which envelopes the persons and exploits of his predecessors on the plains of India. Not inferior in wisdom, in valour, and in magnificence, to Osiris, with whom Sir Isaac Newton improperly confounds him; nor exceeded, in the vastness of his projects and the wildness of his ambition, by Semiramis herself, Sesostris flourished on the throne of Egypt, according to Eusebius, in the eighteenth century before the Christian æra; but, according to that great chronologer, far later in the history of the world. These were in fact two celebrated kings of this name, who reigned in Egypt; a circumstance which has occasioned great confusion and warm contentions among the various chronologers. Without entering in this place into minute and uninteresting discussions on that head, we shall in general observe, that Sesostris, the invader of India, is represented by Diodorus,* the Sicilian, to have been no less gigantic in person than in the comprehensive grasp of his mind; to have been equally powerful by land and by sea; the dispenser of wise laws at home, and the irresistible disposer of sovereignty abroad.

But, before I enter upon the particulars of this celebrated invasion of India, since Sesostris belongs to a dynasty of Egyptian sovereigns, during the existence of which the most stupendous event, recorded

* Diodorus asserts, that he was in height four cubits and four hands breadth, which is six feet ten inches. Lib. i. p. 51.

in the annals of the world, was transacted, the hypothesis, upon which this work has all along proceeded, will not permit me to advance farther, without paying that due consideration to it which an event of such infinite moment demands. Its connection too with the Indian history, from the *Pallis*, or *shepherds*, being the principal actors in the early part of the scene, as well as the strong and irresistible light, which many circumstances in the subsequent relation, some of them entirely new to the English reader, throw on the sacred Scriptures, are farther inducements with me not to pass unnoticed the following interesting details.

The repeated and positive proofs, collected from the Brahmin records, in the preceding pages of the migration of the PALLIS from India to Egypt, at a very early period of those respective empires, added to what we know from other ancient authors concerning the dynasty of shepherd-kings that ruled in Egypt, lead to consequences extremely important, with regard to a people, whose peculiar destiny and wonderful history (though mounting up to the highest post-diluvian antiquity) have purposely not yet been discussed in the present volume; I mean the people so particularly favoured of the true God, the HEBREW NATION. They, also, were a race of shepherds; and, if they were not originally of the same stem with the Pallis, they were at least first stationed in Egypt under that celebrated dynasty. It is a circumstance, too, that cannot fail of forcibly impressing the attentive mind of the Christian reader, when I inform him, that Goshan, in Sanscreet, means a *shepherd*; that Goshana, in the same dialect, means the *land of shepherds*; and that a considerable Indian tribe at this day remains distinguished by the name of Goswani.

The eternal decrees of Providence had determined, for purposes ever wise but ever inscrutable to man without revelation, that this race should undergo a bondage of many toilsome years in that kingdom; that this bondage and their signal delivery by his own interposition should serve as the basis of a stupendous scheme of sublime

theology, to be inviolably treasured and preserved among them through a series of revolving centuries, till the proper æra should arrive for unfolding that scheme to man in all its purity and splendour. From various circumstances it should appear, that this arrangement was made by Providence on purpose to fulfil those decrees; for, it is peculiarly deserving notice, that to the native inhabitants of Egypt, both in the early and late æras of their empire, *shepherds were ever an abomination.* The Pallis seem to have emigrated from India before the propagation by the second Rama and Buddha of the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul into the bodies of inferior animals, and, like other shepherds, fed upon the flesh of the animals which they reared; or, perhaps their habit of living, entirely different from the generality of the Hindoos, might itself have been the blameless cause of their expulsion. At all events, by observing the accustomed regimen of shepherds, and by banqueting on the flesh of cows, sheep, and goats, they grossly insulted the aboriginal Egyptians; they eat their gods; for, the COW was the sacred symbol of their second great deity, Isis; their devotion to astronomy had sanctified the RAM as the chief of the zodiacal asterisms; and the flesh of sheep was therefore prohibited them either to feed upon or to sacrifice. The flesh of GOATS was in like manner forbidden them, as being the symbol of their mighty PAN, venerated under that form, as Hanuman was in India under that of the APE. The genuine Egyptian monarchs would never have suffered the pastoral race of Israel to bring their flocks and herds in multitudes into Egypt, settle among the Phœnicians,* or Palli, in the land of Goshen, and pollute their tables with their flesh and their altars with their blood; and the necessary result is, that Divine Providence, for the accomplishment of his own wise purposes, ordained and brought about the subjugation of its native sovereigns by a dynasty of shepherd-kings, to facilitate the introduction of the Israelitish shepherds, and their settlement in Goshen under their protection. This assertion may by some be thought to be the acme of superstition; but, in every dispassionate view of

things, the operation of that Providence in this business must appear distinct, manifest, and decided; for, when the object intended was fully accomplished, when, in the course of their long abode in Egypt of 215 years, that is, from the birth of Levi to their departure, the Hebrews had become, under their protection, a great and numerous people, the shepherd-kings, who themselves only enjoyed the throne of Egypt 259 years, were expelled by a general insurrection of the native princes. It was under this new dynasty of Egyptian kings, who *knew not Joseph, and to whom shepherds were an abomination*, an abomination not only because they reared cows, sheep, and goats, (the gods of Egypt,) for the purpose of feeding upon them; whereas fish, grain, and some kinds of birds, formed the principal part of the provision of the native Egyptian; but because the Phœnician shepherds were the conquerors of their country, and ruled them two centuries and a half with a rod of iron; it was under this dynasty, I say, that the Israelites were so grievously oppressed from a spirit of deep-rooted revenge in their new sovereigns, and of jealousy of their increasing numbers; and it was also on one of the Pharaohs, who constituted it, that their Almighty Deliverer got himself glory by overwhelming the tyrant and his host in the waters of the Red Sea.

The very existence of this shepherd-dynasty has been the subject of debate among the learned; and all the history that we have concerning it is given in a solitary passage in Josephus against Apion, extracted from Manetho's account of the Egyptian dynasties. That authority might still be suspicious, were it not for this important and indisputable relation from the Sanscreet books of the conquest of Egypt by the Palli, who, it is remarkable in Josephus's account, are called *men from the Eastern regions.* That account being extremely valuable, and intimately connected with the subject of this history, is here inserted, as it may prove useful to those persons, who are at this time in India, making farther investigation into the history of this celebrated race of the Palli.

Were not, indeed, the genealogy of the race of Abraham so minutely detailed to us in sacred writ from a variety of resembling circumstances, the purity and sublimity of the primæval devotion of the Hindoos, as given us in the Bhagvat-Geeta, where the most sublime notions of the Deity are throughout inculcated, the similar account exhibited in their respective records of the intoxication and prophetic curse of Satyaurata, and many corresponding parts of the national code, as may be seen in Mr. Halhed's prefatory pages to that code, and Sir William Jones's Institutes of Menu, were it not on this account, and that the supposition involves in it a kind of impiety, I should be induced to consider the Jews as a tribe of the Pallis, and join with Josephus in determining them to be the same race with the Phœnician shepherds themselves. For such, however wonderful it may appear, was that historian's decided opinion in regard to the ancestors of his nation, and it is urged by him, in answer to Apion and others, who reviled the Jews as no better in their origin than slaves to the Egyptians; whereas his aim, however unsuccessful and injudicious the attempt, was to aggrandize his nation, by proving that at one period they were their lords and their conquerors, and weilded the powerful sceptre of that splendid dynasty.

" In the reign of our king Timaus," says Manetho, cited by Josephus, " God was, on some account, angry with us; and suddenly an *army of men from the Eastern region*, who were of obscure original, boldly invaded our country, and easily subdued it without so much as fighting a battle. These men, having got the rulers of it into their power, afterwards barbarously burnt the cities and demolished the temples of the gods. They likewise treated all the inhabitants in a most hostile manner; slaying some, and reducing others, with their wives and children, into slavery. At length they made one of their leaders king, whose name was Salatis. He fixed his seat at Memphis, and made the higher and lower country (of *Egypt)* tributary to him, and left garrisons in the most convenient places. But he

fortified most strongly the eastern frontiers of the country, foreseeing that the Assyrians, who were then grown potent, would probably, at some future period, invade that kingdom. Therefore, having observed, in the Sethroite Nome, a city conveniently situated on the east side of the Bubastic channel, called Avaris in the ancient theological books, he repaired it, and built a strong wall about it, and placed in it a garrison of two hundred and forty thousand men. He used to come thither in summer to distribute among his soldiers their allowance of corn and to pay their wages; at the same time to review them, and examine if they were expert in the exercise of their arms, that they might be a terror to foreign nations. He died after he had reigned nineteen years.

" After Salatis, another king called Bæon reigned forty-four years. After him, Apacnas reigned thirty-six years and seven months. After Apacnas, Apophis reigned sixty-one years: then Janias reigned fifty years and one month. After all these, Assis reigned forty-nine years and two months. These six were their first kings, who were continually at war with the Egyptians, having nothing more at heart than the utter extirpation of them. This people were all called HYCSOS, *i. e. shepherd-kings:* for HYC, in the sacred language (of the Egyptians), signifies a *king*, and SOS, in the common language, denotes a *shepherd* or *shepherds*; and of these two the word HYCSOS is compounded. Some say they were Arabians."

Manetho farther related, " that the before-mentioned kings, called *shepherds*, and their posterity, ruled over Egypt 511 years. After which, the kings of Thebais and of the Lower Egypt associated against the shepherds, and had a dreadful and long war with them. But, in the reign of Misphragmuthosis, the shepherds were conquered, and, being driven out of all the rest of Egypt, were shut up in Avaris, which place contained in circuit ten thousand arouras. This place," Manetho adds, " the shepherds had surrounded with a high and strong wall, to keep their possessions and the plunder which they got out of the country in security; but Thummosis, (Tethmosis,

or Amosis,) the son of Misphragmuthosis, besieged them with an army of 480,000 men, and endeavoured to take the city by storming the walls; but, despairing of success by siege, he stipulated with them that they should leave Egypt, and go whither soever they pleased without molestation. Upon this capitulation they marched with their families and all their effects, to the number of 240,000 persons, out of Egypt, through the wilderness, into Syria. But, being afraid of the power of the Assyrians, who then ruled in Asia, they built, in the country now called Judæa, a city large enough to contain all their families, which they named Jerusalem."*

Concerning the incomprehensible word HYCSOS, used above by Josephus, Mr. Bryant has the following very ingenious conjecture. "The original term which Josephus probably copied was Ὑκκους, or, with the Greek termination, Ὑκκουσος, *i. e.* the great Cush, or Lord Cusean. It is true Ὑκκουσος, or, as it had better be written, Ὑκχουσος, relates to a people who were shepherds, but that profession is not necessarily nor originally included in the name. Josephus, having said that Σως signified a *shepherd*, induced Eusebius to retain it, and to write the word Ὑκκουσως, a mistake that is easily remedied. The term then Ὑκκουσως, which should have been Ὑκχουσσος, or Ουκχουσσος, signifies the Lord Cusean, and it might easily have been mistaken for a shepherd. For, as the Egyptians hated the memory of the sons of Chus, who were of that profession, it was natural for them to call every shepherd a Cusean; so that a Cusean and a shepherd might have been taken for synonymous terms: but the true meaning is as I have represented it."†

However reproached by the Egyptians with sanguinary cruelty in this invasion, no criminality probably adequate to so heinous a charge as is here brought against them may attach itself to the shepherds who subverted their temples. It was against those temples, erected

* Josephus contra Apion, lib. i. p. 445.

† Analysis, vol. ii. p. 251.

to the basest of divinities, even the groveling bestial herd, that their rage was kindled and their vengeance pointed; it was against a race involved in the grossest idolatries, that, according to Manetho's own confession, they were made the instruments of the terrible vengeance of the Most High: and it should not be forgotten that an Egyptian, with all the partiality and prejudice of his country, relates the calamitous event.

There are also other circumstances plainly indicative of the direct interference of Providence on this momentous occasion. The shepherd-kings, who had never been able to accomplish the entire subjugation of the Thebais, though its princes were tributary to them, had their residence, as we have seen above, at Memphis, and it was in that capital, and in the reign of the fifth monarch of that dynasty, named Pharaoh Janias, in the 18th century before Christ, that Joseph entertained his five brethren and his father Jacob on their arrival in Egypt. In the fraternal fondness of his heart he told his brethren that they and his aged father *should dwell near him*, and he placed them with Pharaoh's own shepherds in the Heliopolitan nome, *which bordered on the Red Sea*, and of which the metropolis was On, or Heliopolis, the City of the Sun, a daughter of one of the priests of which deity, according to Genesis xli. 45, Joseph married. This country, being situated some leagues distant from the banks of the Nile, was not subject to the annual inundations of that river, and therefore was a more proper place of residence for shepherds and the pasturage of flocks than any other of the Egyptian nomes; it was sanctified by the previous residence of the patriarch Abraham, who had taught astronomy to the priests of Heliopolis; and it was a situation most convenient for their Exodus, when, at the call of Jehovah, they were to pass through the suspended billows of the Arabian Gulph; those billows, that became a wall to them on the right hand and on the left. Their situation, therefore, on the Arabian side of the Nile, which river, in consequence, they had not to pass on their flight from their proud oppressors, and in Goshen,

the district nearest to Phœnicia, are circumstances that must be considered as ordered by an all-seeing Providence.

In evidence of the migration itself of the Hebrews, Palemo, an ancient Greek writer, who composed a history of Egypt in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and who could have no interest in misrepresenting, is cited by Eusebius as affirming, "that, in the reign of Apis, son of Phoroneus, part of an Egyptian army retired out of Egypt and settled in Palestine, a district of Suria not very remote from Arabia;"* which is a palpable, though pardonable, mistake, by a Greek, of an Egyptian for an Hebraic army, as the Egyptians equally detested and dreaded the Phœnician pastors, and were also utterly adverse to them both in their civil institutions and their religious ritual. Apion, also, a learned Alexandrian and a determined enemy of the Jews, who flourished in the reign of Tiberius, and was the antagonist of Josephus, is brought, by the same author, to attest, that he was expressly informed by Ptolemy, of Mendez, in his Egyptian history, that the Jews, under Moses, their leader, went out of Egypt in the reign of Amasis;† a circumstance confirmed also by Herodotus, in the second book of his history; and though there the Hebrew nation is degraded by being represented as if expelled for the leprosy, yet, by this very evidence, the fact itself is placed beyond all doubt. Again, Artapanus, who lived about a century before the Christian æra, expressly affirms, in Eusebius, that "the Heliopolitans relate, that their king, with a great army, at the head of which were borne the sacred animals, pursued the Jews, who had carried away the goods which they borrowed of the Egyptians. But Moses, by a divine command, smote the sea with his rod, upon which the waters gave way, and their whole army marched through upon dry land; and, whilst the Egyptians went in after them and pursued them, lightnings flashed in their faces, and the sea returned into its channel, and overwhelmed them; so that the Egyptians, partly by

* Eusebii Præp. Evang. lib. x. cap. 10.

† Ibid, lib. x. cap. 11.

lightning and partly by the surges of the sea, perished to a man, while all the Hebrews escaped unhurt."* The circumstance here mentioned of lightnings flashing upon the Egyptians is likely to have been traditionally remembered, and is almost a literal translation of those words, that the Lord looked upon them through the *pillar of fire and the cloud*, and troubled the host of the Egyptians.

With respect to the scandalous story relative to the cause of the departure of the Hebrews, as if they were afflicted with a leprous distemper, it probably took its rise from either or all of these causes; some perverted account of the *grievous murrain*, with which Egypt was punished on their account; or from the circumstance of Moses's hand having become leprous at God's command; for, when taken out of his bosom, it was *as white as snow*; Exodus iv. 6; or the slaughter and destruction by the sword of the destroying angel of all the first-born of Egypt. In respect to their miraculous passage through the Red Sea, we have the additional support of Diodorus, who acquaints us, that the Icthyophagi, a people who inhabited the southern borders of the Red Sea, had an immemorial tradition relative to an extraordinary phœnomenon that took place in very ancient æras, in regard to that sea, — the reflux of its waters, by which it was dried up to the very bottom;† for, to use on this occasion the express words of Strabo, who also records the solemn fact, "There is an ancient tradition among the Icthyophagi, who live on the borders of the Red Sea, which they had received from their ancestors, (εκ προγονων,) who inhabited that shore, and was preserved to that time, that, upon a great recess of the sea, every part of that gulph became quite dry; and the sea, falling to the opposite part, the bottom of it appeared green; but, returning with a mighty force, regained its former place. The rude Icthyophagi remembered this calamity:‡ the Egyptians chose to erase the memory of it from their minds and

* Eusebii, lib. ix. cap. 27, p. 436.

† Diodorus Siculus, lib. iii. p. 174.

‡ See Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 760.

their annals.* With respect to that ancient subject of sceptical objurgation, their *right* to invade the region of Syria, and the original curse of Canaan, I must remark, that no longer can it, with any shadow of truth or justice, be urged, that Moses artfully represents Canaan as cursed by Ham, for the purpose of animating the children of Israel to invade that country, and attempt their subjugation. It is not only Noah in the Mosaic writings that curses Ham's posterity; for we find Satyaurata, in the Hindoo records, also, cursing the posterity of Charm; and even the effrontery of modern scepticism will scarcely allow that Satyaurata, the universal monarch of India, cursed Charm's posterity to favour the invasion of Canaan by a race to whom his nation, through every past age, have been, and are, to this day, almost entire strangers. The blasphemy may become such a superficial writer as Bolingbroke; but, after this clear proof of the genuineness of the prophecy, and of its being generally known by tradition all over the East, no scholar or liberal commentator, even of a sceptical description, will venture to renew the objection, an objection so futile, and so utterly unfounded.

To return from this digression on the Israelites in Egypt to the invasion of India by Sesostris, the proper subject of this chapter. — Notwithstanding Osiris and Sesostris, as was before observed, are confounded by even so great a chronologer as Sir Isaac Newton, the two characters are as perfectly distinct as the æras in which they flourished are remote. The former was the great legislator of Egypt and the founder of that ancient monarchy; while the latter greatly extended the bounds of that empire, adorned Egypt with many noble edifices, and enriched her code of laws with many wise institutions. It having been predicted to Amenophis, the father of Sesostris, while he was yet unborn, that he should one day be lord of the whole earth; with a view to verify the flattering prediction, and to provide him with faithful ministers and affectionate soldiers of his own age, he

* Eupolemus also in Eusebius asserts this, lib. ix. cap. 17.

collected together all the male infants throughout his kingdom that were born on the same day with Sesostris, and ordered them to be trained up in the same habits, instructed in the same arts, and accustomed to the same athletic exercises. After a long and severe course of discipline and study, the accomplished band of youthful statesmen and warriors were summoned from the seats of science to the field of active exertion. To inure them at once to every hazard and toil of military life, they were sent on an expedition into the hitherto unconquered region of Arabia; where, amidst barren deserts, venomous reptiles, and a subtle and intrepid foe, they found full scope for the exertion of all their patience, skill, and fortitude. They returned victorious from this their first campaign, and their success was looked upon by Amenophis as the certain presage of future and more brilliant triumphs.

Resolved, however, that their ardour for glory should not cool, nor the experience they had acquired become useless through inaction, he soon sent them with a larger army towards the west, with which they penetrated into the remotest regions of Africa, conquered many savage nations, ravaged many powerful kingdoms, and, having gained a sight of the vast Atlantic, its boundary, returned once more to Egypt, crowned with laurels and laden with spoil.

The death of Amenophis, which happened shortly after, seemed to be the signal given by fate for the commencement of those splendid events, which were to dignify Sesostris with the promised sovereignty of the earth. He determined, therefore, without delay, to begin his new career of glory, and attempt the subjugation of all Asia. An army, adequate to the accomplishment of so grand a design, was immediately collected together from the most distant quarters of his dominions, consisting only of those who were in the flower of their age, and in the vigorous possession of their matured faculties. When assembled for the review of the king, this force consisted, according to Diodorus Siculus, of 600,000 foot, 24,000 horse, and 27,000 cha-

riots of war.* The chosen companions of his infancy and sharers of his former glory, who were near 1700 in number, were appointed to various posts of honour and eminence in this vast armament; and every breast throbbed with the high and sanguine expectations of their commander. That no inferior consideration might divert their minds from pursuing with vigour the grand object of this expedition, before this faithful band left Egypt he settled upon each of them and their families for ever a portion of the royal domains, adequate to every purpose of maintaining that distinguished rank among their fellow-citizens which their services entitled them to expect, and of which their virtues finally proved them to be deserving.

The politic lessons he had in his youth learned did not permit Sesostris to leave Egypt without other wise precautions, which were necessary to keep his kingdom during so long an absence as seemed necessary to accomplish his views in undisturbed subjection to his authority. He, therefore, in the first place, divided the vast kingdom of Egypt into thirty-six nomes or provinces, and appointed able and faithful governors to command them. A lavish distribution of wealth and honours, a general amnesty of all crimes, and an absolute remission of all debts, followed that cautious measure, and operated in the most forcible manner to fix the loyalty and attachment of his subjects.

There remained, however, one great obstacle to his views. An army, however formidable, without a fleet to co-operate with it on the coast of the invaded country, seemed to him by no means competent to effect its complete subjugation; and unfortunately the Egyptians, at this early period of their empire, had, from certain superstitious motives, an utter aversion to the sea. In their allegorizing style they termed it the monster Typhon, the evil genius and determined enemy of Osiris, whose capacious jaws swallowed up their venerated Nile. Sesostris was indefatigable in his efforts to pro-

* Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 48–50.

vide one. He succeeded in conquering their rooted antipathy to naval concerns; for, Herodotus, when in Egypt, was informed by the priests, that Sesostris* was the first who fitted out a fleet of long ships, with which he sailed down the Arabian Gulph into the Red Sea, and reduced the inhabitants of the coast under his dominion; till his farther progress was stopped by the shoals and the danger of the navigation, when he returned to Egypt. The Red Sea, or Mare Erythræum, as we have before remarked, was that which we now call the Indian Ocean; for, how otherwise could Sesostris have sailed through the Arabian Gulph into the Red Sea, unless the present Mare Indicum anciently went by that name? Diodorus,† who is more particular in regard to the number of vessels, says, that Sesostris had a fleet of four hundred long ships, with which he sailed into the Red Sea, and conquered all the islands of it, and all the sea-coasts as far as India. The latter author adds, likewise, that, probably with a view towards reconciling the Egyptians to naval concerns, he constructed a most magnificent vessel of cedar, two hundred and eighty cubits long, richly ornamented on the outside with devices in gold, and within beautified with plates of silver, which he consecrated to Osiris. Manetho, who, as we have already intimated, compiled an Egyptian history from inscriptions on the pillars in Upper Egypt, has asserted, that Sethosis, or Sesostris, had, at the same time, another powerful fleet acting in the Mediterranean, with which he conquered Cyprus, Phœnicia, and the neighbouring coasts. Whether or not this fleet ever existed any where but in that imagination which fabricated the ante-diluvian dynasties that bear his name, it is not so much our business to inquire as to pursue the operations of the Indian navy, which, sailing beyond the Persian Gulph, traversed the southern coasts of the peninsula of India; reducing, in its progress, the cities in those parts, and probably establishing colonies of Egyptians, who might long remain in subjection to the sovereigns of Egypt. This

* Herodotus, lib. ii. p. 102.

† Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 48–50.

latter circumstance seems not to be mere conjecture, but derives considerable weight from the known custom of conquerors in those days, and from what is expressly reported of the conduct of Sesostris in peopling the cities he took; especially in his having established a colony at Colchis, who, says Herodotus, from ocular observation, bear in their appearance the distinguishing features, the swarthy visage, and short curly hair, of the Egyptians. It is farther strengthened by a consideration of the intimate connection that for many ages subsisted between the two countries, united, as they were, by commerce, influenced by congenial customs, and at least not very dissimilar in the rites of religion. In a Persian history quoted by Ferishta,* and said to be written by an author of good authority, it is related, that the Afghans are of the race of the Cibthi, (Copts, or Egyptians,) who were ruled by Pharaoh; and, being expelled about the time of Moses, took up their residence in the mountains of Hindostan. To this remark may be added another of Sir William Jones, "that the mountaineers of Bengal and Bahar can hardly be distinguished in some of their features, particularly their lips and noses, from the modern Abyssinians." After coasting, with imminent hazard, the peninsula, the fleet arrived near the *mouths* of the Ganges; where, as Dionysius at its *sources*, so Sesostris is said to have erected triumphal pillars, inscribed with his name, that of his country, and a recital of his victories. This was the extreme eastern boundary of the expedition by sea; and it is not impossible that the words of Herodotus, above cited, may allude to that peculiar danger of navigation to inexperienced seamen, in this part, of which Captain Hamilton speaks, and those innumerable sands and shoals that block up the entrance of this celebrated river.†

Having taken this cursory view of the operations of the naval armament of Sesostris, which, though cursory, is as ample as can be collected from ancient Greek writers of repute, and, indeed, consi-

* Ferishta, vol. i. p. 37.

† Diod. Sic. p. 51.

dering the utter uncertainty of the subject, as ample as it merits from an historian not wholly devoted to the fabulous, we must direct our attention to those of the invading army: and here we have a detail of great and surprizing events from the sober pen of classic history, that must startle every reflecting mind, and is scarcely credible even for those periods of romantic daring. With the vast army before enumerated, Sesostris, or Sethosis, as the Greek writers more commonly denominate him, (though, on the Egyptian obelisks that record his triumphs, he is styled by a name not very dissimilar from that of the great Indian hero, — RAMESES,) with this vast army, that most celebrated of the Egyptian sovereigns left his capital of Memphis, and first shaped his course towards the maritime region of Phœnicia and Syria, which he expeditiously subjugated. He then directed his progress towards the Upper Asia, and bent beneath his yoke the monarch of Assyria: thence, pursuing his victorious career, he entered the more northern district of Media, which he completely subdued. In this part of the narration a circumstance very deserving of notice should not be omitted; for, from these two latter kingdoms being thus separately mentioned, we have evident proof that the event took place before the Median was swallowed up in the vortex of the vast Assyrian empire, and an important point in chronology is thus incontrovertibly settled. It was probably after his conquest of Media that he led his army by the usual rout into the Northern India, whose remotest mountains he penetrated, and thence, continuing his progress eastward, he crossed the Ganges, nor stopped, if we may believe Diodorus and the geographer Dionysius, till he had reached the ocean that forms the boundary of Asia on this quarter.* In this secluded region he is said by these authors to have erected pillars descriptive of his conquests, which, as in every other part, were engraved with a singular species of symbol, expressive of the fortitude or cowardice of the inhabitants of the conquered countries; the former quality designated by the

* Dionysius de Perieg. verse 625, and Diod. Sic. p. 50.

male organs of generation, the latter by the female. Some of these pillars were remaining in the time of Herodotus, who saw them in Palestine-Syria, while others were seen by Strabo in Æthiopia and Arabia.* In addition to these memorials of his prowess, he also caused gigantic statues of himself to be erected, bearing in one hand a *javelin* and in the other a *bow*, with inscriptions that sufficiently mark the arrogance of this haughty conqueror.

Sesostris was now the undisputed lord of the whole continent of Africa: the spacious provinces of the Higher Asia had experienced the desolating ravages of an army, animated by principles far less noble than those which led the benevolent Osiris to the same field; the south and the east had fallen before him, the north and west were yet to be subdued. With an ardour that defied the rigour of hyperborean climes, he passed the eternal snows of Caucasus in pursuit of glory, amid the wilds of Scythia and the forests of Thrace. Among the Scythians, according to Diodorus, his arms were crowned with equal success; for, he is said to have conquered that nation as far as the river Tanais, although it must be confessed the event is very differently related by Justin, who informs us, that his troops were defeated, at the river Phasis, by a Scythian monarch of the name of Tanaus, and driven back to the very frontiers of Egypt.† The former relation, however, is more generally admitted by ancient historians as representing the truth; and, in proof of it, may be alleged the information contained in Herodotus, concerning his having founded a colony and fixed a kingdom at Colchis, on the river Phasis, at the eastern extremity of the Euxine Sea. He asserts, that, down to his own time, the inhabitants of that region acknowledged their descent from an Egyptian founder; and that, in their aspects, persons, and habits, both civil and religious, they carried very evident testimony of that descent; that, in particular, they used one remarkable rite in common with the

* Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 166, and Strabo, lib. xvii.

† Compare Diod. Sic. lib. i. p. 49, with Justin, lib. ii. cap. 3.

Egyptians, — that of circumcision; that their language bore a striking affinity to the Coptic; and that, among the archives of Æa, the capital of Colchis, were reposited the maps of their journey, performed during their migration from Egypt, with accurate designations upon them, describing the limits of sea and land, whence geography took its rise.* After this, he is represented as crossing over the Hellespont into Europe, and subjugating Thrace; but, in this expedition, he was so obstructed by the natural difficulties of a country as yet unsubdued by the arm of industry, and, amidst its rugged mountains and steep defiles, was in such imminent danger of losing his army and perishing by famine, that he was compelled to make the Thracian kingdom, after defeating and slaying Lycurgus, its sovereign, the utmost limit of his conquest on the west. These discouraging circumstances, added to the treachery of his brother Armais, the supposed *Danaus* of the Greeks, who had usurped his throne and his bed, induced this great conqueror to commence his return towards Egypt, where he arrived with an innumerable band of captives of all nations, and with an immense booty obtained in the plunder of Asia, after an absence of nine years. He returned only to encounter new dangers from the base practices of his unworthy brother, who, feigning repentance and submission, would have sacrificed himself and all his family at a banquet prepared for him at Daphne, near Pelusium, but the good fortune of Sesostris triumphed over the designs of that traitor; who, being exiled into Greece, gave birth to a new power in that region; a power which, rising by slow degrees, in the end, gave law both to Egypt and Asia.

The reign of Sesostris, known in India, as a conqueror, by the name of Sacya, and supposed, but with much violation of just chronology, to be the Sesac of Scripture, forms a memorable epoch of magnificence and glory in the Egyptian history. Finding himself incumbered with an immense number of captives, and with propor-

* Herodotus, lib. ii. p. 103.

tionate riches, he made them both subservient to the aggrandizement and decoration of his native country. The former he employed in erecting a vast rampart of stone, that extended from Pelusium, through the desert, to Heliopolis, with a view to fortify that region of Egypt against the incursions of the Arabian and Syrian robbers; in raising temples in every city of his empire to the peculiar deity of the place; in digging, in some places, extensive canals for the more equal distribution of the waters of the Nile; and, in others, throwing up mounds, to secure them from the devastations of that river in the period of its inundation. The latter he expended in adorning the inside of those temples, in rewarding merit, as well in the military as in the civil line, and promoting useful arts and manufactures. Among the more stupendous monuments of his magnificence should not be forgotten those two majestic obelisks, erected at Thebes, 120 cubits in height, with intent to eternize his triumphs. It is to one of these obelisks that Pliny alludes, when he informs us, that, in the cutting of it from the quarry, no less than twenty thousand men were employed; and, when it was erecting, the king, apprehensive that the machines were not sufficiently strong to raise so vast a weight, or that the workmen might sink under the undertaking, ordered his son to be tied to the top of it, to engage the artificers, from regard to his safety, to take the utmost precaution that it should not fall or break. When Cambyses took the city of Thebes, and set it on fire, and the flames, spreading to the temple, reached to the base of this obelisk, which was erected in the area of it, he was so struck with the amazing grandeur of the column, that he ordered the flames to be extinguished, which were ready to destroy it. One of these obelisks, probably the only one that remained, bearing the name of Ramessæan, from Rameses, the builder, was brought to Rome by order of Constantius, and placed in the great circus. The same, having been thrown down and broken by the Goths, was, in the pontificate of Sixtus the Fifth, found buried six yards deep in

mud, and was, by that pope's order, erected close by the church of St. John de Lateran, in the year of our Lord 1588.

With respect to INDIA, the more immediate object of consideration, the inundation of foreigners, and the change of theological opinions, the natural result of extensive conquest, introduced by this irruption, seem to be indelibly recorded in the annals of that country; for, in the Asiatic Researches, discoursing on the antiquity of the Indian zodiac, Sir William Jones acquaints us, that he has perfectly satisfied himself, that the practice of observing the stars began with the rudiments of civil society in the country of those whom we call Chaldæans, from which it was propagated into Egypt, India, Greece, Italy, and Scandinavia, before the reign of Sisac, or Sacya, who, by conquest, spread a new system of religion and philosophy from the Nile to the Ganges about a thousand years before Christ.* At this period, probably, were first diffused in India those principles of materialism which the followers of Buddha, whose name was Sacya, are accused of propagating. This Buddha, I mean the second of that name, (for, it is not to be supposed that an Avatar could inculcate principles leading to atheism,) mentioned by Kæmpfer under the name of Sacat Budia, the great god of Japan, is recorded to have been of Egyptian origin, though he assigns his appearance to a far later period; viz. that in which Cambyses ravaged Egypt, and drove its affrighted priests into all the neighbouring regions of Asia.† But the Chinese approach much nearer the truth when they fix the birth of the great Xa-Ca, their Foe, (for, Foe is only Budh softened in a language which has neither B nor D in its alphabet,) to about the thousandth year before Christ. Of this great saint probably Sesostris was the protector; and the war, in that case, as usual, originated in religious feuds, the name of the conqueror and the patronized saint being incorporated.

* Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 301.

† Kæmpfer's Japan, vol. i. p. 38.

Various others among classical writers dubiously and in detached fragments record an ancient invasion of India by an army of Æthiopians; and, since Æthiopia is said to have been first conquered and civilized by Sesostris, it is natural to conclude it was effected, if ever, by an army of Æthiopians, collected together under the banners of that chief. There is a passage in the Dissertation on Egypt and the Nile relative to this subject too important to be omitted. " The people named Cutila-Cesas are held by some Brahmins to be the same with the Hasyasilas, or at least a branch of them; while others suppose that the Hasyasilas are the remnant of the Cutila-Cesas, who first settled on the banks of the Nile; and, after their expulsion from Egypt by DEVANAHUSHA, were scattered over the African deserts. The Gaituli, or Gaityli, were, of old, the most powerful nation in Africa, and I should suppose them to be descendants of those Cutilas who settled first near the Cali river, and were also named Hasyasilas: but they must have dwelt formerly in Bengal, if there be any historical basis for the legend of CAPILA, who was accustomed to perform acts of religious austerity at the mouth of the Ganges, near old Sagar, or Ganga, in the Sunderbans. They were black and had curled hair, like the Egyptians in the time of HERODOTUS. It is certain that very ancient statues of gods in India have crisp hair and the features of negroes; some have caps, or tiaras, with curls depending over their foreheads, according to the precise meaning of the epithet Cutilalaca: others, indeed, seem to have their locks curled by art, and braided above in a thick knot, their faces were black, and their hair straight, like that of the Hindoos who dwell on the plains. They were, I believe, the straight-haired Ethiops of the ancients, and their king, surnamed MAHASYAMA, or the *great black*, was probably the King ARABUS, mentioned by the Greek mythologists, who was contemporary with NINUS. As to the first origin of the Danavas, or children of DANU, it is as little known as that of the tribe last-mentioned; but they came into Egypt from the west of India, and their leader was BELI, thence named DANAVEN-

DRA, who lived at the time when the Padma-Mandira was erected on the banks of the Cumudvati, or Euphrates."

In the Cutila-Cesas, who thus invaded India from the south, the reader cannot fail again to recognize the sons of Chus, whose peculiar allotted district was Æthiopia; and, in the Danavas, we see the Belidæ pouring in through the western frontier of Persia from the overcharged regions of Mesopotamia. Whosoever attentively considers the above authentic attestation, together with the various and forcible evidence before produced in honour of the Mosaic history, *of which we must soon finally take our leave*, must be convinced that the hypothesis of the Hebrew legislator is no artful contrivance of a profound politician to aggrandize himself and keep in due subjection a blinded and turbulent people, but a system founded on truth as its basis, and corroborated in all its material parts by the annals of the most ancient kingdoms of THE GREATER ASIA.

CHAPTER VI.

Concerning the Invasion of ASSYRIA *and* INDIA *by the ancient* SCYTHIANS, *as detailed in classical Writers, compared with the Account of the Irruption, into the same Countries, of* OGHUZ KHÀN, *by the Tartar Historians.*

THE great Hercules, upon whose exploits and character we have already dwelt in such detail, is reported, by Herodotus, in a very wild tale, to have been the progenitor of the Scythians. In his peregrination through Asia, having arrived at that desolate, and then uninhabited, region of the globe, he is said, during a sleep occasioned by his incessant fatigues, to have lost the mares that drew his chariot; and, it is added, that, in his search after the strayed animals, he met with a monster compounded of a woman and a serpent, and that, from his embrace with that monster, sprang three sons, of whom Scythes, in strength most resembling his father, because able to bend his bow, became the first monarch of the Scythians. This romantic legend concerning the *woman* and the *serpent* is here only mentioned as one of the numerous marked mutilations of the great primæval tradition, which, under various modifications, we have traced through the whole circuit of the Greater Asia. In Eendra's paradise,* at the beginning of time, serpents engendered of a woman guarded the AMREETA, or *water of immortality:* add to this, that the figures of Narayen, or the supreme deity moving on the waters, Lachsmee (a beautiful woman) and a serpent, according to Mr. Forster, are frequently found combined, and are a prominent symbol in Indian pagodas.† Indeed, with all the Eastern cosmogo-

* See History of Hindostan, vol. i. p. 498. † Forster's Sketches of the Hindoos, p. 11.

nies, is interwoven an infinity of serpentine emblems and allusions. Mithra has his serpent; Osiris combats with the serpent Python; Syria has its egg and serpents; Phœnicia has its serpents entwined round pillars and climbing up trees. In Greece, and in the Orphic theology, Hercules himself was represented under the mixed symbol of a lion and a serpent, and sometimes of a serpent only. M. D'Ancarville derives all this from a Scythian source, and, in part, from this very legend: for my part, I cannot but persevere in referring the whole system to the higher and more sacred origin intimated above.

A fondness for establishing a new hypothesis led the same writer to exalt the Scythians of remote periods to the first rank of conquerors and philosophers. Their arts extending with their arms from the polar to the southern regions of Asia, according to that hypothesis, gave sovereigns and letters to the infant kingdoms of Assyria, India, and Egypt, then generally considered as part of Asia. The system of D'Ancarville at first surprised and dazzled his readers; but, at present, has few advocates, since whatever himself and M. Bailly have asserted concerning the sciences, especially the astronomy, of the ancient Scythians is now known to be true only of a northern race of Brahmins situated near the great range of Caucasus. These Brahmins, originally emigrating from the grand school of the Chaldæan Magi, at Babylon, carried with them letters and the arts northwards as far as the borders of the Caspian and Euxine; and, mingling afterwards with the learned colony of Egyptians, before intimated to have been established at Colchis, diffused the hallowed flame of science, and caused it for ages to flourish through all the provinces adjoining on the north and east to Iran, or Persia, Bactria, Media, Sogdiana, Tibet, and Cathaia. If they are to be denominated Scythians, their proper name should be Indo-Scythians; but these are, in every respect, far different from the savage hyperborean race, alluded to by M. Bailly and D'Ancarville, who tenant the dreary wilds of Siberia, in the latitude of Selinginskoi, near the 60th

degree of northern latitude. The attestations, however, of Diodorus Siculus, Justin, and other classics, whom those writers have produced as their vouchers, prove a very extended influence of the Scythian power over the regions of the Higher Asia. That they established any regular empire in the conquered, or rather plundered, provinces, over which their hordes had spread themselves, can scarcely be credited; much less that they continued sovereigns over them, or retained them tributary during fifteen hundred years,* when their expulsion from the southern Asia, under Ninus, took place. Quitting these far-fetched ideas of their wisdom and prowess, we find no genuine memoirs of any grand irruption, in those ancient times of the Scythian or Tartarian tribes, into the southern Asia, till the reign of Oghuz Khan, whom Abulghazi Bahadur, the only authentic historian of that nation, records to have been contemporary with Caiumeras, the first regular king of Persia, of the Pishdadian family; but the æra of whose reign it is impossible with certainty to fix, though Sir William Jones, in his short History of Persia, inclines to think him the same monarch with the *king of Elam* mentioned in Scripture.† A very remarkable statement, in favour of the preceding assertion, is to be found in the same author's Essay on the Tartars, viz. that the genuine traditional history of the Tartars, in all the Oriental books which he had inspected, begins with Oghuz in the same manner as that of the Hindoos commences with Rama; and, he adds, that they all place their miraculous hero and patriarch four thousand years before Jengis Khan, who was born in the year 1164 of the Christian æra.‡ So little was really known of Ogyges by the Greeks, and his æra ascends to periods of such high antiquity, (every thing ancient being called by them *Ogygian,*) that it is not impossible but they might have formed the Greek from the Scythian term; collecting at the same time, from their neighbours, the Scythians of Colchis,

* Diod. Sic. lib. II. p. 127; et Justin, lib. ii. cap. 3.
† Nadir Shah, p. 39, first edit.
‡ Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 25.

the portion of Scythian history relating to the conquests of this prince. In fact, that æra reaches nearly up to the Noachic deluge itself; for, even the Tartar historian states him to have been the grandson of Mogul, or Mung'l Khan, the immediate descendant of Japhet, through the line of Gog and Magog, the Yajuj and Majuj of the Arabian historians. Magog was the second son of Japhet; and, in that word, the origin of the name may be clearly traced.

According to Abulghazi, this war of Oghuz began, like all the Indian contests in the first ages, on the score of *religion*. His own subjects and those of all the neighbouring kingdoms had deserted the faith of their ancestors, the true patriarchal religion. After a series of domestic and foreign contests, which continued during seventy-two years, he re-established the religion of Japhet in his own dominions, and in those of Thibet, Tangut, Kitay, and other states more immediately adjoining. Enjoying a very prolonged life, he afterwards made war on Iran, or Persia, considered in the most extended sense of the word, during the minority of Husheng, grandson of Caiumeras, while that country was distracted by the divisions of its nobles, in consequence of the infancy of its monarch. He is said first to have besieged and taken Chorasan, the capital of the province of that name. The provinces of Irak, or Babylon, Azerbigian, and Armenia, were next subdued and made tributary. Returning thence, Oghuz advanced with an innumerable force towards the northern, and at that time probably the most powerful, provinces of India; Cabul, Gazna, and Cashmere. The first two provinces were speedily subjugated; but, at Cashmere, he found an obstinate resistance from JAGMA, the ruling prince, (possibly JAMADAGNI, the head of a great Hindoo family in the north of India, and of royal descent,) who, by fortifying all the avenues of the stupendous mountains that form the natural barrier of that province, and by lining with soldiers of determined bravery the banks of the numerous rivers that intersect it, retarded his progress for an entire year. At the completion of that period, the perseverance of Oghuz sur-

mounted every obstacle; the opposing army was routed with great slaughter; and the troops of the conqueror, pouring down on all sides into the city, massacred the greatest part of the inhabitants. The brave, but unfortunate, JAGMA himself, being too dangerous a rival to be suffered to live, was devoted (though certainly not in the spirit of Japhet's religion) to destruction; and Oghuz returned to his hereditary dominions by way of Badakshan, the territory of the ancient Massagetæ and Sogdiana. This last-mentioned circumstance proves those hereditary dominions to have been situated far beyond, and to the north of, these provinces, in the vast regions that lie between the domains of the Czar of Muscovy and the Emperor of China; and it is far from impossible that the territories of both those potentates were originally peopled by colonies, laterally branching out east and west, from the mass of this ancient and hardy people. There are other invasions into the southern regions of Asia recorded of Oghuz, in one of which he is said to have penetrated even to Sham, or Damascus, the capital of Syria, and to Misser, or Cairo, the capital of Egypt: but that above related is the principal, and the others may be the invasions of the chiefs of the race called, from him, Oghuzian, a title which the Ottoman Turks, who boast their descent from this monarch, are still fond of assuming.

By the course of the Hydaspes, one of the noblest rivers of the Panjab, an immediate descent lay open for the invaders into the more southern provinces of India, which we cannot suppose would be wholly neglected by a race whose object probably was plunder; and this will account, in some degree, for that great mixture of Tartarian manners and customs which diligent observers of India have discovered to be interwoven with the sacred and civil institutions of India; for, the date of the invasion is so remote, as to allow this mixture before the full establishment of all the wise and various laws by which that vast empire is regulated. On his return, Oghuz entertained his sons, who were six in number, at a most magnificent

banquet, under tents adorned with pomegranates of gold, richly set with precious stones; and, with the peculiar prepossession of the Tartars for the number *nine*, he ordered nine hundred horses and nine thousand sheep to be killed on the occasion, with such a proportionable allowance of fermented liquors, of which the Tartars were always extravagantly fond, served up in leathern bottles, whose amount was regulated by the same sacred numeral, and mares' milk, alike their ancient and present beloved nutriment, as in those days was considered in the highest degree sumptuous.

It has already been noticed from Diodorus, cited by M. D'Ancarville in support of his Scythian hypothesis, that the Scythian power, in the south of Asia, met with a final overthrow from the arms of Ninus; but, unless we admit Caiumeras to a much higher station in antiquity; unless we allow him to have been in reality, as the Persians presume, one of the earliest sovereigns after the deluge, and of the Mahabadian, or Beline, dynasty; Ninus, though, doubtless, recorded by Diodorus to have driven back the Scythians of Bactria from their predatory incursions, could never have put a period to the Oghuzian tyranny, which, according to Abulghazi, took place at a period so much later than that in which Ninus flourished. The attack made by Ninus on Bactria, at that time the frontier province, towards Persia, of the great Scythian or Tartarian empire, abounding, if Ctesias may be credited, with noble cities, and fortresses not less impregnable by art than by nature, is one of the most celebrated exploits in the antiquities of Asia. The reigning sovereign was Oxyartes, a chief of great experience in war, and commanding intrepid subjects, of whom he is said to have collected 400,000 in the field to oppose the invader, whose force, according to the usual exaggerated accounts of Asiatic armies, is said to have consisted of a million and a half of infantry, 200,000 cavalry, and 10,000 armed chariots. Oxyartes drew, with all his forces, towards the high range of mountains, a part of the Paropamisus, that separate Bactriana from

Persia and India, and form its boundary on that side. The very superior numbers of his army allowing the Assyrian monarch to divide his forces into three columns, each of equal magnitude to the whole army of the Bactrians, he attempted and effected an entrance at different parts through the difficult passes of those mountains; but, before any considerable body had penetrated through them, or could be formed on the plain, the latter began an impetuous assault upon them, while fatigued with their march through those rugged defiles, and put them to flight. Fresh battalions, however, successively and resolutely rushing forward to support their comrades, the scale of victory became soon turned in favour of the invaders; and the Bactrians, overpowered by numbers, were compelled to betake themselves to their fortified cities and castles. From these cities they were driven by the victorious army, and compelled to take refuge in the capital of the province itself, denominated from it Bactria, which held out a tedious and obstinate siege. It was during the attack of this city, that the martial talents as well as beauty of Semiramis excited the attention and admiration of Ninus, and prepared the way to the immediate participation of his bed and throne. That heroine, dressed in military attire, was daily seen and conspicuously active in every part of the works. She animated the besiegers as well by her voice as her example; and, observing their time and attention to be principally engaged, not on the fortress itself, but on the bastions of the city, where even success would scarcely have gained them any decisive advantage, she, with a select band of assailants skilled in escalade, pushed forward to the citadel itself, climbed up the steep rocks on which it was situated, and, hoisting her victorious banners on its summit, invited the Assyrian troops to make the assault where victory waited for them and glory was certain. The attack was instantly made; and the capital of Bactria, and the power of Scythia, bowed its head before the superior genius of Ninus and Semiramis. It should be noticed, that Ninus is expressly said, by Diodorus, not to have made any impression upon India, during either this or his

former campaigns; the glory, or rather disgrace, of that enterprize was left, we have seen above, to his partner and successor.*

The next important irruption of the Scythians at all connected with Indian history, and therefore alone necessary to be mentioned here, took place under Cyaxares, the first sovereign of that name who sate on the throne of Media. Media was, at that time, one of the most powerful empires of all those that sprang up from the ruin of the great Assyrian monarchy, subdued by Arbaces. This is probably the grand irruption alluded to by the writers cited by D'Ancarville; but, unfortunately, it took place only about the middle of the seventh century before Christ, and could not, therefore, possibly have been attended with any important consequences to the arts and sciences, except their retardation and subversion among the people whom they visited. History records not the precise cause of their invasion, though Herodotus intimates that it arose in distractions among themselves, and that the nation properly termed Scythians, under their King Madyes, by Strabo called Indothyrsis, pursuing their Cimmerian enemies through southern Asia, over-spread, with their innumerable forces, the rich and fertile empire of Media.† Cyaxares was at that time absent from his kingdom, on an expedition against Nineveh, whose utter extermination he had vowed, and had already sate down before that declining capital in regular siege; but the instant destruction, which now menaced his own empire, induced him hastily to raise the siege, and march with the utmost expedition to endeavour to save the capital of Media. Every exertion which the short interval allowed was made by a prince whose wisdom was equal to his bravery; but in vain did he advance with the utmost force he could collect together against the deluge of barbarians that inundated his kingdom: though every thing was accomplished which a consummate general, at the head of undaunted soldiers, could perform, all their efforts were rendered ineffectual by the crowds of human

* Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 94.

† See Beloe's Herodotus, the note, vol. i. p. 110.

savages that rushed down from all the heights of Caucasus and its neighbourhood, and Media, as well as the greater part of Upper Asia, including the region of India bordering on the Sind, was compelled to submit to their yoke. But the seizure of the immense spoil, which this irruption produced to them, was far from satisfying these insatiable marauders. They extended their depredations to Syria, and were rapidly advancing to the banks of the Nile, where Psammitichus, who then reigned in Egypt, came out to meet them on the frontiers of his kingdom; and, partly by submissive entreaty, partly by munificent presents, he prevailed upon them to desist from their intention of plunging Egypt into the horrors of that unbounded desolation which involved the rest of their conquests. Departing hence, a considerable part of their army broke into Palestine, and seized upon the district and city of Bethsham, on the River Jordan, where they settled; and that city was thenceforth called, from them, Scythopolis. From their new possession, however, they were afterwards expelled by Nebuchadnezzar, when he ravaged this part of Syria. The remainder of the Scythian army returned in triumph to the undisturbed enjoyment of their conquests in Upper Asia, of which they continued the sovereign disposers during twenty-eight years, when a successful stroke of policy, executed by Cyaxares, enabled him to free his burdened empire from the farther oppression of those northern tyrants. On a certain appointed day, a great feast was prepared, in every family of the Median empire, for the entertainment of all the Scythians of distinguished rank resident among them. The latter, lulled into fatal security by the apparent civility and affected submission of the Medes, indulged in the licentious joys of the banquet, and suffered themselves to be overcome with the generous wines, for which Persia was always famous, and with which they were abundantly plied. In this denfenceless situation, they fell a prey to the smothered vengeance of the enraged Medes, and all the men of rank and distinguished officers were massacred, while the great body without was vigorously attacked by the Median

soldiery, and pursued beyond all the frontiers of Media. By this politic measure, Cyaxares regained, with great slaughter, the sole sovereignty of his invaded realm; and thus was he left at liberty to pursue those projects of vengeance which, in concert with Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, he afterwards manifested, in the destruction of Nineveh and the conquest of Egypt. The Scythians, thus precipitately driven away through every outlet of the Median empire, endeavoured to obtain a settlement in the neighbouring regions; some of them entered into the armies of the king of Babylon, and were instrumental to the subjugation of Tyre and of Egypt; others fled towards the coast of the Mediterranean; whence, according to the probable hypothesis of the indefatigable explorer of Hibernian antiquities, they emigrated towards the western islands of Europe, their very name being preserved to this day in Scotia, or Scuthia, (equally applied in ancient time to Ireland and Scotland;) but the greatest part marched northwards, to their own proper domain, where they had a new war to wage with their slaves, who had seized upon their property and married their wives.

Although we have no express authority, from Sanscreet writers, for affirming that any considerable portion of this routed army settled in the Indian provinces, yet, from what we know of a race of Nomades, actually called *Nomardy*, who at this time inhabit many of the western banks of the Indus,* and travel, after the old Scythian method, in their wooden houses, from place to place, as pasturage is more or less abundant; as we know that the whole tract in question was anciently denominated Indo-Scythian; and as the Massagetæ, (or Great Getes, as they are called by D'Ancarville,) who inhabited the more northern districts adjoining India, not only ranked among the noblest tribes of the Scythians, but are known to be the ancestors of the Getes, a formidable race of robbers, situated, when Timur invaded India, in the very heart of that country,† and from whom

* See Major Rennel's Memoir, p. 291, edit. 1788. † See Hist. of Timur Bec, vol. ii. p. 46.

the modern Jauts are sprung; from all these circumstances combined, we must be convinced that India, in its western frontier, at least, if not in its internal domain, severely felt the shock of this repulse of the Scythians. That violent contests had long subsisted between the Indians and the Hunns, the most savage of the Scythian tribes, who were originally inhabitants of Asiatic Sarmatia, is farther evident, from an inscription, in the most ancient Sanscreet dialect, found on a pillar near Buddal, translated by Mr. Wilkins; and to which that gentleman could not assign a date less early than that engraved on the copper-plate found at Mongueer, which was twenty-three years before Christ; an inscription in which, among the exploits of the mighty monarch to whose honour it was erected, and whose kingdom is said to have extended from the Cow's Mouth to Ceylone, is particularly mentioned the defeat and humiliation of that ferocious tribe. The passage is here given verbatim, together with the explanatory notes of the translator:

"Trusting to his wisdom, the king of Gowr * for a long time enjoyed the country of the eradicated race of Ootkal, † of the HOONS ‡ OF HUMBLED PRIDE, of the kings of Draveer || and Goorjar, § whose glory was reduced, and the universal sea-girt throne." ¶

The passage above-cited exhibits to us a magnificent picture of the Indian empire at that period; for, by the expression of "the universal sea-girt throne," we must infer, that in addition to the whole country lying between the Ganges and Indus, on the former of which rivers stands Gowr, and on the latter of which stretches Guzzurat, he possessed the sovereignty of the whole peninsula, which is on all sides surrounded by the ocean. Whoever considers the beauty and

* The kingdom of Gowr anciently included all the countries which now form the kingdom of Bengal on this side the Brahmpootra, except Mongueer.

† Orixa.

‡ Huns.

|| A country to the south of the Carnatic.

§ Guzzurat.

¶ Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 136.

riches of the provinces included in the circle of this vast empire, and compares them with the bleak, barren, and mountainous, region to the north of Candahar, the proper residence of the ancient Massagetæ, will scarcely wonder at the frequent attempts of the latter to obtain the possession of them, or the vigorous defence of them, by the former, against the attacks of a sanguinary banditti. In fact, it was from the very same region, many centuries after, that those resistless conquerors descended, whose successive armies spread desolation through her fertile valleys, and on the ruin of Indian liberty and glory raised an empire, the proudest in wealth, and the most formidable in power, that the sun ever beheld. Till we arrive at that momentous period of our history, we must take leave of these northern invaders; since the account of their celebrated conflicts, with Cyrus and Darius, properly belongs to the page of Persian history.

THE

HISTORY

OF

HINDOSTAN,

SANSCREET AND CLASSICAL.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

PART THE SECOND.

SANSCREET HISTORY

OF THE

AVATARS

RESUMED.

HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.

BOOK IV.

CONCLUDING THE HISTORY OF THE FOUR REMAINING INDIAN AVATARS, OR DESCENTS OF DEITY.

CHAPTER I.

The seventh Incarnation of Veeshnu in the Person of RAMACHANDRA, *the great Legislator and Reformer, supposed to be the Osiris of Egypt and Grecian Dionysius.*

THAT a very considerable portion of the ancient history of India is couched under that of the three Ramas, if all three are not, in fact, what seems to be extremely probable, only different representations of one sovereign chief, eminent in arts and brave in arms; and that the achievements of the first Cuthite colonies, in conquering and civilizing the southern regions of India, over-run, as the Lower Egypt in preceding pages is depicted to have been, with monsters and dæmons, are shadowed out in this particular Avatar, by Ravan and his army of associated giants; are intimations already submitted to the judgement of the reader. Whether this hypothesis, of their personal identity, be true or not, it is certain that, in the belief of the Brahmins, the same transmigrating spirit is supposed to have suc-

cessively passed into and animated the bodies of the two first of those warriors; for, in their system, intended directly to inculcate, on their disciples, the fanciful doctrine of the Metempsychosis, the souls of Jamadagmi and Renecu, the parents of Parasu, are represented to have passed into the bodies of Dassaratha and Causelya, the parents of Ramchandra. Dassaratha, however, was not only the nominal father of this mighty Avatar, he was also, by another wife, the immediate progenitor of the great Bharat, the acknowledged sovereign of all Hindostan, in periods not wholly emerged from fable; and from whom we have observed the whole country is generally, in Sanscreet records, denominated BHARATA. Bharat was the father of Judishter, whose exploits, with those of his brothers, are the subject of the Mahabbarat, whence the first ray of genuine Indian history emanes, amidst the ten-fold obscurity of its intricate mythology. But this subject will be discussed more at large hereafter: our present business is with the hero of the seventh Avatar; who, as just observed, was the son of DASSARATHA, monarch of Owdh, in Bahar, and of CAUSELYA, a princess of royal descent; a name which, it has already been observed, is a derivative of CUSHALA, and therefore marks her for the mother of this renowned Cuthite. The father's exploits seem to fall little short of the son's in lustre; for, his name signifies *one whose car had borne him to ten regions*, or to the eight points of the world, the zenith, and the nadir; and, according to the Brahmanda Pooraun, that father was descended from Surya, or Heli, which is equally a name of the Sun, in Greek and in Sanscreet; a circumstance which proves that they could go no farther back in his genealogy, since these genealogies always end in planetary progenitors. One of his ancestors, the great Rhagu (celestial dragon) had conquered the seven Dweepas, or the whole earth, and VEESHNU became incarnate in the person of his son RAMACHANDRA. It happened, in the reign of DASSARATHA, that SANI (the planet Saturn) having just left the lunar mansion, Crittica, or the Pleiads, was entering the Hyads, which the Hindoos call

Rohini; an universal drought having reduced the country to the deepest distress, and a total depopulation of it being apprehended, the king summoned all his astrologers and philosophers, who ascribed it solely to the unfortunate passage of the malignant planet: and VASISTHA added, that, unless the monarch himself would attack SANI, as he strongly advised, neither EENDRA, nor BRAHMA himself, could prevent the continuance of the drought for twelve years. DASSARATHA that instant ascended his miraculous car, of pure gold, and placed himself at the entrance of Rohini, blazing like his progenitor the Sun, and drawing his bow, armed with the tremendous arrow Sanharastra, which attracts all things with irresistible violence. SANI, *the slow-moving child of* SURYA, *dressed in a blue robe, crowned with a diadem, having four arms, holding a bow, a spiked weapon, and a cimeter*, discerned his formidable opponent from the last degree of Critica, and rapidly descended into the land of Barbara, which burst into a flame, while he concealed himself far under-ground. The hero followed him; and his legions, marching to his assistance, perished in the burning sands; but SANI was attracted by the magnetic power of the Sanharastra; and, after a vehement conflict, was overpowered by DASSARATHA, who compelled him to promise, that he never more would attempt to pass through the wain of Rohini. The viotor then returned to his palace, and the regent of the planet went to SANI-STHAN, in Barbara, while the ground, on which he had fought, assumed a red hue.

Thus renowned, according to the Pooraums, was the father of our hero, the great Ramchandra, who was born in the Treta-Yug, and had the great Hindoo priest and prophet Vasishta, in his earliest youth, appointed for his guru, or tutor. Under that venerable sage, he soon became profoundly versed in all arts and sciences; but still more eminent for his rigid austerities and incessant devotion, leaving the palace of his father for the deserts, and spurning the ease and delights of a court, for long and wearisome pilgrimages to the most holy and distant pagodas of Hindostan. In consequence, the events

of no preceding Avatar engage a larger portion of the walls of those pagodas, than those of the present. The priests were impressed with the remembrance of his peculiar protection of their order, and his feats are blazoned by them with more than common pomp. The cause of the appearance of the Deity, in every fresh Avatar, should ever be borne in mind by the reader, which is the humiliation of pride and the subversion of gigantic vice in Dityas; or, in other words, tyrants in iniquity resembling dæmons, who have been originally elevated to thrones by means of dissembled piety and bodily austerities, always intense, and often in the highest degree sanguinary. This constantly recurring circumstance, added to their certain downfall, after they had relaxed in their spiritual vigour, and had grown insolent, arbitrary, and cruel, were, doubtless, intended as so many direct proofs of a presiding Providence, to whom the loftiest potentates are equally accountable for their actions as the humblest of their vassals; and that our future good or adverse fortune, in a great measure, depends upon our just or improper use of the gifts of that Providence. The tyrant of the seventh Avatar was Ravan, who, according to the Ayeen Akbery, " having ten heads and as many hands, spent ten thousand (lunar) years, on the mountain of Kylass, in worshipping God; and devoted ten of his heads, one after the other, in hopes of obtaining, for his final reward, the monarchy of the three regions." He obtained his desire; but, intoxicated, as was usual with this order of Dityas, when their ambition was gratified with the influx of power, so greatly abused it, as to render his removal necessary to the welfare, not less of Devatas than of human beings; and, on this occasion, Ramchandra was appointed the agent of the divine vengeance.

Every circumstance combines to prove that the first great empire, in Hindostan, was founded on or near its greatest river, in that vast fertile valley, through the centre of which it runs; an empire stretching northward to the feet of the mountains that bound it on that quarter, and westward to the Panjab. This empire, probably

first established by the father of Rama, was enlarged, by his son, in its eastern limits, and extended southward, over the peninsula, to the great island over which Ravan is said to have reigned. Indeed the immense scale on which it was erected may be judged of by the magnitude of its capital, which, say the Brahmin books, extended over a line of ten yojans, or forty miles; the present city of Lucnow being only a lodge for one of its gates, called *Lachmanadwara*, or the gate of Lachsman, a brother of Rama.* It probably continued to be so till the time of Alexander's irruption; for, these were exactly the limits of the empire of the Prasii and Gangaridæ; and it is remarkable, that, within the same level tract, are discovered the Hastinapoor, or *Place of Elephants*, of the old Brahmin romances; the Pallibothra of the Greek historians; the Canouge of the Mohammedans; and the Patna, thought to be on the scite of Pallibothra, of more modern invaders; all, in their turn, flourishing capitals in that region of India.

Over this great empire, destiny appointed Ramchandra the future potent sovereign; and, for the proper government of the kingdom, he was trained in youth by a long series of voluntary severities, in which he first learned to govern himself, and subjugate his own passions to the control of reason. Having punctually performed all the ordinances of the Vedas, and gone through the whole circle of the sciences with Vasishta, his renowned guru, at the usual early age he was espoused to the famous Sita, the daughter of a neighbouring rajah, whom he obtained in a trial of skill with other young princes, his rivals, by his superior dexterity in the use of the bow. Ram, however, wasted not his youth in the enervating pleasures of love. Being at once a great prophet and a powerful prince, he set off from his father's capital, with his beloved and beautiful wife, accompanied by his brother Lachsman, and, crossing the Ganges, commenced his travels through Hindostan; travels, like those of Osiris, intended at once to reform and subdue. The steepest mountains and the most

* Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 259.

dreary deserts are passed with equal facility; and every where, in his progress, he relieves the oppressed, liberates the captive, routs the Dityas, and succours the Devatas. Sometimes we find him in his hermit's cell, engaged in intense devotion, surrounded with disciples on whom he inculcates the Metempsychosis, that peculiar doctrine which his Avatar seems to have been invented on purpose to impress with energy on the mind of the Indians; at other times, we find him advancing, in terror, at the head of an army, created by his command and obedient to his nod. The air swarms with Devatas, ever ready to assist him; and the most miraculous prodigies are incessantly performed throughout the varied drama. It is Rama civilizing and conquering the world; collecting into cities the savages of the mountains, and restraining, by laws and discipline, the predatory banditti of the desert. Such we have seen, in a former page, is the decided idea of Sir William Jones, in respect to this wonderful personage and his martial exploits; and, by this rule of argument, we must form our judgement of his celebrated contest with the giant RAVAN, king of Lanca, or Ceylone, into which alone it is necessary to enter at any length.

In infant states, not wholly emerged from barbarism, one of the principal sources of mutual contention, among the aspiring chieftains, has ever been females of superior beauty, or other commanding attractions; nor must we wonder, if the rapture of Helen, by Paris, caused the ten years war and destruction of Troy, that the seizure of the more beautiful Sita, by Ravan, should convulse the continent of India. The conflict, between Rama and Ravan, forms the leading feature in the character of this Avatar, which displays to us, on the one hand, valour, when firmly connected with virtue, as invincible by any human power; and, on the other, conjugal affection, equally impregnable to the allurements of temptation and the menaces of despotism, as rising in brighter splendour and purity from the refining fire of adversity. It appears, from the Brahmin books, which describe this Avatar, that Rama and Ravan had been rivals in the trial

of skill by which the former obtained his wife. The success of the former, who was then but a youth, stung the jealous Ravan to the soul, and he burned for an opportunity to revenge the insult. An outrage offered by Lachsman, the brother of Ram, to the sister of Ravan, inflamed in a high degree his thirst for vengeance. But the tyrant too well knew, and too much dreaded, the vigorous arm of the incarnate god, to think of attacking him by open violence: he meditated, by fraud, the accomplishment of that vengeance; and determined to wound him in the tenderest part, by robbing him of Sita, his beloved wife. To effect his purpose, by the transmigrating power which his former penitentiary life had obtained him, he assumed the body of a beautiful stag, and remained continually browzing about the hut, erected near the Ganges, in which Rama, with his wife, performed the austerities of Indian anchorites. His sportive gambols, and the beauty of his shining skin, particularly attracted the notice of Sita, and she requested Ram to shoot the animal, and present her with its skin for an ornamental vest. Rama, by his omniscience, being no stranger to the turbulent spirit that animated the stag, at first opposed her desire, and warned her of the probable danger that would attend the act; but Sita persisting in her request, he consented, on condition that both herself and his brother Lachsman should, during his absence on that exploit, confine themselves within the limits of three circles, which he immediately drew, with chalk, around the hut. To those conditions she readily assented; and Ram, taking with him the unerring bow, after a chase of many cose, shot the devoted animal to the heart. The liberated spirit of Ravan immediately entered the body of a mendicant *Yogee*, stationed near the hut of Ram, who, with loud and doleful lamentations, bewailed the lot of Ram, about to perish under the superior might of his assailing enemy! Alarmed and terrified at the sound, Sita immediately besought Lachsman to fly to the relief of his brother; but he, suspecting treachery, and confiding in the power inherent in an incarnate deity, who had already triumphed over numerous and powerful armies sent against him by

the allies and relatives of Ravan, refused to pass the prescribed limits of their temporary prison. A repetition, however, of the dreadful tidings, added to the renewed entreaties, and still more eloquent tears, of his sister, at length prevailed on Lachsman to quit the hut, and seek his brother. It was now that the artful mendicant, with a tale of well-feigned woe, approached the deluded princess, and, for the love of Veeshnu, besought that relief which no Yogee implores of the pious in Hindostan in vain. Although, regardful of her husband's injunction, Sita at first declined complying with his wants; yet, afterwards, as he grew more importunate, she thought the pious occasion might justify her passing over at least the first prohibited circle, in order to relieve his hunger with such homely fare as an anchorite's cell afforded. She did so; but, on her extending her arm, to present him with the vegetable boon, the royal impostor caught hold of her hand, and, gently drawing her over the two other lines, dissolved the charm that formed her security, and bore her triumphantly away, through the regions of the air, to his palace at Lanca. Fearing, however, to incense his queen, if he brought her within the walls, he erected for her a pavilion, under one of the largest trees of the garden of the palace, where she was watched, day and night, by a guard of gigantic females, and had daily the mortification of receiving the visits of her ravisher, though neither threats nor persuasion could bend her intractable mind to consent to the gratification of the criminal passion with which he burned.

In the mean time, Lachsman had not advanced far in his search after Rama, before he met him returning, loaded with the skin of the slain deer, intended as a present for his beloved Sita. Their agony, to find her gone from the hut, was inexpressible, and infinitely increased by their ignorance whither she was fled. They set out, therefore, to ransack earth and Hades for the fugitive beauty; and, in their travels through a subterraneous cavern, are informed by a penitent Yogee, at his devotions, that he had recently beheld a Ditya flying through the air with a female, in a southern direction,

which Rama immediately knew must be his enemy Ravan and the object of his research. In the same direction they immediately shape their course; and, as they traverse the mountains of the peninsula, meet with Hanuman, king of the Apes, (that is, a race of savages inhabiting the Gauts, whose forests abound in that animal,) of whom they make farther inquiries, and by him are shewn a ring, which fell from the car of some unfortunate female hurried through the air by a malicious dæmon. Rama instantly recognized the ring for Sita's; and now, knowing they must have gone to Ceylone, engaged Hanuman, with a vast army of his subject apes, to assist him in the recovery of his wife. Of this army, Hanuman was appointed generalissimo, and many of his courtiers subordinate commanders. They march on till they come to Madura, on the sea-shore, and here a natural phænomenon, which presents itself to the view of the astonished spectator, gave birth to the romantic story of their raising, at the point of Ramancoil, a bridge of rocks from the continent to that island. But, during the delay which this stupendous undertaking occasioned, Ram, being exceedingly anxious to know how Sita was treated by Ravan, and whether she retained her connubial fidelity inviolable, prevailed upon Hanuman to use the power, conferred on him by Veeshnu, of transporting himself through the air to the palace of Ravan, and resolving his anxious doubts on this interesting subject. Hanuman accordingly commences his aërial expedition; but, arriving in the region above Ceylone, finds his progress opposed by ten gigantic dæmons, whom Ravan had appointed guardians of the entrance into the island from that quarter. The prominent feature of this Avatar, the *Metempsychosis*, here again forces itself upon the recollection of the reader; for, to avoid their fury, Hanuman migrates into the body of a fly, and, descending on the shore in that form, enters the island; but he had now a land-enemy to encounter, in the person of an enormous Ditya, placed sentinel on the coast. The fly might easily be crushed, but the *ape*, endowed with that peculiar portion of immortal vigour supposed in the Hindoo

romances to be attached to Hanuman, (for, in their mythology he is the son of one of their chief deities,) might be a match for the terrific Ditya. Resuming, therefore, his natural form, he engaged the dæmon with such courage and energy, that, not less astonished at his bravery, than apprehensive of his own defeat, his gigantic adversary desired a parley, and inquired his errand on that island. Hanuman replied, that he was come thither for no other purpose than to explore Sita, the wife of Ram, his sovereign and master. The Ditya, without hesitation, informed him, that he would find her in the garden of the palace of Ravan, his potent lord, under a sysem-tree: upon which they parted in tolerable good humour. Pursuing his journey, under various disguises, Hanuman at length reached the palace, and, taking his station, in the form of a cat, on the battlements, he there observed the captive princess under the described tree. He immediately descended from the eminence on which he sat, and hastened towards the pavilion, which he reached, unobserved, at the instant Ravan himself entered, and thus became an ear-witness of the ardent protestations which he poured forth to the disdainful princess. Every flattering tribute that could gratify ambition or avarice, his power, his kingdom, his revenues, were offered in profusion, in case she would consent to share his nuptial bed. Unwrought upon by all his artful representations, she sternly answered, that she was Ram's alone; that to Ram, her heart, while it continued to beat, would remain inviolably faithful; and, in consonance with the received notions, in Hindostan, of the mighty power attached to wedded purity, she added, that, if he persisted to torment her with his loathed addresses, *she would consume him with fire*. On the tyrant's departure, Hanuman, mounting in the air, dropped into the lap of Sita the ring he had received from Ram, which she eagerly seized, and instantly knew to be her own. After a moment's reflection, she burst into a flood of tears, conjecturing that it could only have fallen from Ram, who, combating with some of the malignant genii of the air, had been defeated and slain. The faithful Hanuman immediately became visible, and,

throwing himself at her feet, transported her with the tidings of her husband being in perfect health and security, and of his having dispatched himself for the express purpose of searching out her place of confinement, and of consoling her in her exile from all she held dear. Accustomed to the insidious designs of her ravisher, Sita, for a time, doubted the truth of all he asserted; but Hanuman again and again protesting his sincerity, and that he had received that ring from Ram himself, to be conveyed to her as a pledge of his unaltered affection, provided she preserved her connubial vow unviolated, her sorrowing tears were converted into those of heart-felt rapture; and she charged him to hasten to her lord with renewed protestations of her duty and eternal regard, as well as with her ardent entreaties that he would exert his utmost to rescue her from the daily insults and outrages of her tyrant. She then took one of the bracelets from her arm, and gave it to Hanuman for Ram, in proof of his having been successful in discovering her, and as a pledge of her unaltered affection. Hanuman promised faithfully to fulfil her commands, and respectfully took leave of the princess; but was so exasperated against Ravan, that, as he passed through the beautiful gardens, he tore up the stately trees, scattered about the delicious fruits, and turned the giant's paradise into a desolate wilderness. The gardeners, observing the dreadful havoc made by this mischievous ape, went with loud complaints to Ravan, who, enraged at the treatment, sent armies of giants to attack him, all of whom Hanuman successively defeated, being enabled, by the imparted energy of Ram, to rend up the largest trees by the roots, which he made use of as his weapons of offence; tearing to pieces the arrows, converted into serpents, that were darted against him, and annihilating the combined efforts of sorcerers and magicians. The page of history would be degraded by entering into a minute detail of such puerilities; we, therefore, return with him to the continent, where the innumerable battalions of apes, or mountaineers, have already constructed a bridge of rocks one hundred leagues in length, and where Ram impatiently waited

the arrival of his herald. The tidings brought by Hanuman at once consoled and animated the son of Dassaratha; and he rapidly passed the miraculous bridge, at the head of no less formidable a body than 360,000 apes, commanded by eighteen kings, each having under him 20,000.

Here it should be remarked, in respect to this vast army, that, in the belief of the superstitious Hindoos, these apes, who were doubtless *men* collected together under the banners of a great conqueror, from all parts of India, but particularly the higher regions of the peninsula, hardy, resolute, and accustomed to range the forest like the fabulous satyrs, till reclaimed by Rama from their savage state, are supposed to have been so many Devatas inhabiting human bodies, united under the command of their second greatest AVATAR, to accomplish the utter destruction of an overgrown tyrant who oppressed them; a monster of injustice, cruelty, and lewdness. It seems to have been the origin of the famous Egyptian legend, that, at a particular æra, when all kinds of impiety and crimes abounded, the terrified gods were compelled to take refuge under the form of terrestrial animals. In relation to the bridge recorded to have been built by this army of satyrs, part of it, according to the Hindoo belief, exists at this day, being that series of rocks to which the Mohammedans, or the Portugueze, (alluding, perhaps, to the famous Pica d'Adam, or print of Adam's foot, on the highest mountain of Ceylone,) have given the name of Adam's Bridge; but this we have seen, from Sir William Jones, is a vulgar error, since it should be styled Rama's Bridge. The Missionary Bouchet, in the "Lettres Edifiantes," describes this bridge as composed, not of arches, but of prodigious stones, rising about three feet above the water, many eighteen feet in diameter, and others still more, with spaces of from three to ten feet wide between every stone. In the same book we are informed, that these remaining masses of rock, whether (originally) artificially or naturally deposited here, have been absolutely used, in modern times, as a bridge, by the rajah of Marava,

who, when pursued by the king of Madura, actually passed over it to Ceylone with all his army, treasures, and elephants, upon great beams thrown across their surface.*

To resume our narrative:—Ram, having passed this mighty bridge, marched on with all expedition to the capital of his determined enemy, the whole island of Ceylone being struck with terror at the immensity of the invading army, the brightness of their armour, and the loud clangor of their war-like instruments, all but the hardened tyrant himself, who, from the turrets of his palace, surveyed with composure the vast cavalcade advancing to his destruction. Ram, though yet at a great distance, espying the tyrant in that elevated situation, took aim at him with his never-failing arrow, and at once shot off all the ten crowns from his ten heads. His wife, who had frequently remonstrated with him on the subject of Sita, being at this juncture with him, seized the opportunity to renew her representations, and urged him to remember, that he, who was able thus dexterously, with one arrow, to shoot off the ten crowns from his ten heads, could also with equal facility, in the same manner, separate the ten heads from his mangled trunk. Ravan turned a deaf ear to all her entreaties, and was rather confirmed than shaken in the obstinate resolution he had taken, not to restore Sita to her injured husband. That husband now advanced in all the avenging fury of an irritated prince and of an insulted god. Amidst the denunciations of vengeance, like a true deity, Ram exalted the voice of mercy; and one of the chief generals in Hanuman's army was dispatched to inform Ravan, that if he would, even at this late period, consent to deliver up his captive, the horrors of desolation, by fire and the sword, might be prevented, and the lives of thousands of his peaceful subjects be saved. The ambassador, however, was received at Ravan's court with accumulated insult, and the dreadful preparations for battle began on both sides. Previous to its commence-

* Lettres Edifiantes, tom. xv. p. 34.

ment, the brother of Ravan and some of his most experienced warriors, conjecturing what must be the infallible event, and lamenting the fatal obstinacy of their sovereign, came over to the camp of Ram, and, making their submission, after proper proofs of their sincerity, were received into favour and honoured with his confidence. Indeed the legend makes these renegados to be of great importance to their new sovereign, by developing the projects of Ravan, and counteracting his malignant designs. A select body of ten thousand veteran Dityas, on whom Ravan placed a firm reliance, began the assault; but, by the might of Ram and Lachsman, were quickly routed and slain. Other bodies of giants successively followed, of greater number and not less courageous, but were defeated by the desperate valour of Hanuman and his apes. Above one hundred thousand of Ravan's army soon lay dead on the field. It became now necessary to exert those powers of magic which are never wanting, on grand emergencies, in an ancient Indian campaign; but the detail of which I shall generally decline, as not at all likely to entertain the rational reader, or instruct the modern warrior. On the present occasion, the ingenuity of the supernatural machinery made use of, entitles it to some notice.

Ravan's eldest son, by name Inderset, owing to intense austerities, was in high favour with Brahma, who had imparted to him energies more than human, when engaging an enemy. This demi-god now led on to the combat the remainder of Ravan's exhausted forces, and, by the most animating addresses, incited them to rush on the foe, avenge their slaughtered comrades, retrieve the sullied honour of their king, and, by one desperate and united attack, retrieve the fortune of the day. While these men were fighting with a valour bordering on desperation, Inderset himself mounted into the air, and darted upon the apes arrows, which, the instant they reached the earth, were converted into serpents. These enfolding the bodies of the astonished apes, and confining their arms and legs, left them, thus entangled, an easy prey to the swords and battle-axes of the

gigantic soldiers of Ravan. And, now, victory seemed on the point of deserting even the divine Ram; who, utterly confounded at the disaster, applied to Veeshnu for his aid against the abused power of Brahma. The reader has been informed, in a preceding page, that the food of Garoori, the eagle on which Veeshnu rides through the vault of heaven, consisted of serpents; and that favoured bird was immediately dispatched, by his master, to the assistance of Ram. Pouncing down upon his devoted prey, the majestic bird of the skies stalked over the field of battle, and soon cleared it of the new species of foe that had taken possession of it; and now the apes, disentangled from their serpentine chains, renewed the contest with redoubled fury, while Lachsman, inspired with a portion of Ram's divinity, ascended the ætherial region on the back of Hanuman, and waged a long and dubious conflict with Inderset, in a portion of the sky immediately above the palace of Ravan. In the end, the former of those mighty champions proved completely victorious, and the head of Inderset, cloven from his body by the sword of his antagonist, fell down to earth on the very spot whence the obdurate king had anxiously beheld the bloody conflict. As the gory scalp rolled at the feet of the obdurate father, the distracted Mandora, in a paroxysm of rage, upbraided the unfeeling tyrant with all his unheard-of crimes, unbounded lust, unprecedented barbarity, and shameless injustice, denouncing to him his own instant destruction, unless he instantly sued for peace and released from the power of enchantment the incarcerated Sita. In vain she stormed; in vain she entreated; the adamant of his heart was not to be softened, and he now resolved to try the last, the only, resource which his obstinacy and madness had left him. — Of his slaughtered family, there yet remained to him a brother, elder than that which had fled to Ram. He is represented as a Ditya of enormous strength, but so devoted to sloth, that he was buried in sleep the greatest part of the year, only waking occasionally to swallow down an immense quantity of provisions for the support of existence: under which character is, doubtless, meant to be por-

trayed some neighbouring prince of Ceylone, an indolent and luxurious glutton. But from any sleep, save that of death itself, the thundering exclamations of his brother giant could not fail to awake him; for, suddenly entering his palace, he bellowed out his complaints against an innumerable army of merciless apes, headed by one Ram, that were on all sides ravaging his dominions. He informed him, that already two of his sons, seven of his generals, and nearly 200,000 of his best soldiers, had perished in the conflict, and that he himself, (Ravan,) with the remainder of his family, must inevitably meet the same fate, if not immediately succoured by his powerful arm; an arm that was accustomed singly to crush embattled myriads. This Indian Morpheus, (or rather *Silenus*; for, he is said, in the Indian legend, to have been transported about, when awake, in a car drawn by four *asses*, another remarkable circumstance of similitude with the Greek fables,) this drowsy giant, I say, thus aroused from his deep repose, in return roared out, that his brother had engaged himself in a most unjust war; that no assistance which he might bring could protect him from the certain vengeance of that Ram, who was no less than Veeshnu in human shape; and that, in a recent dream, he had beheld the utter destruction of himself and his army. Ravan, appalled at the horrid denunciation, was at first so confounded he knew not what to answer; but, soon resuming his natural confidence, and conceiving that his formidable brother was a match for even Veeshnu himself, in a firm tone replied, that, if his destiny were fixed, it would be in vain for him to fly from it; that it did not become a great monarch, like himself, tamely to resign his kingdom to an usurper; and he once more conjured him at least to attempt his emancipation from the horde of barbarians that inundated his dominions. The Ditya replied, that, though the effort was hopeless, he would still make that effort, and that his life was at the command of his sovereign and brother. And, now, this terrific combatant moving onwards, like a mountain, towards the field of battle, struck with dismay the bravest of the enemy; all but the intrepid

Ram and Hanuman; who immediately dispatched some thousands of the stoutest apes, accustomed to climb mountains and steep declivities, to tear down the rocky eminences that surrounded them, and hurl them upon him as he passed. These, however, made no impression on the Ditya, who warded them off with his shield, and pierced the ponderous masses through with his arrows. Arrived in the field, a most dreadful slaughter of the apes, from that moment, commenced; and, had not Ram descended from his chariot to succour them, the whole race must have been exterminated. With all his might, drawing the immortal bow, he aimed an arrow that instantly shot off his unwieldy head, which made the earth tremble as it fell, while his agitated trunk continued to make sad havock among the affrighted apes. As fast, however, as they fell, the victims who thus perished were, by the power of Ram, restored to life; and the convulsive motion shortly after ceasing, they were thus effectually delivered from their most dreaded enemy.

The accomplishment of his brother's awful prediction now appeared to Ravan to be rapidly approaching. Despair gloomed upon his face, and remorse wrung his heart; yet not that despair which unnerves for enterprize the palsied hand, nor that remorse which produces repentance and reformation. No; in this last and dire extremity, his soul seemed to acquire new ardour and energy; he rushed on to the field, at the head of his few remaining troops, with such irresistible fury, that Ram himself was constrained to admire his undaunted fortitude: but, it becoming necessary to check his desolating progress, and let him feel the entire superiority of his enemy, he levelled his bow and shot off nine of his heads, calling out to him to desist from provoking farther the power that could in an instant overwhelm him, and promising, if he would, even now, lay down his arms and give up Sita, he would heal his wounds and restore to him his forfeited empire. The tyrant, though covered with blood, and frantic with pain, declared, that if the hour of his destiny was arrived, he must submit to its stern decree, but that he would rather

part with his *tenth head*, also, than relinquish Sita. At this answer, Ram, greatly incensed, shot off his remaining head, and thus exterminated the determined foe that had caused him such accumulated labour and affliction. The perturbed spirit, however, of this dreadful monster, seemed for some time reluctant to abandon the headless trunk; and the numerous hands, each grasping some deathful weapon, still continued furiously to brandish them and mow down whole battalions of inferior warriors. An exertion of magical power, by his conqueror, became absolutely necessary to disarm their undistinguishing fury, and stop the progress of destruction.

The instant that the death of the tyrant Ravan and the rout of his army were known in his capital, his injured and insulted queen hastened to prostrate herself at the feet of Rama, deprecating his vengeance, and denying all acquiescence in the guilty conduct of her husband towards the unfortunate Sita. Ram received her with great kindness and commiseration; and, after commanding her to undergo the accustomed ordeal of fire, by walking over plates of iron heated red-hot, gave her in marriage to the tyrant's brother, his confederate and friend, according to an ancient law of Hindostan, which, not less than the Levitical code, allowed the nuptial union with the widow of a deceased brother. But now his whole soul burned with impatient ardour to liberate and embrace his beloved, his faithful, Sita. He was immediately transported, in his *rose-litter*, to the fatal tree under which she had so long languished in the adamantine bonds of enchantment, now burst asunder by the death of Ravan; and their mutual rapture at meeting, after so protracted a period of separation, can be conceived but not expressed. Ram, however resolutely refused all cohabitation with his charming wife, till she had gone through the most dreadful ordeals of unsullied virtue; till she had trampled, unhurt, the glowing embers; dared the bite of the envenomed serpent; and, in the pride and fortitude of conscious innocence, exposed herself to the rage of goaded elephants and tigers, expiring in the pangs of famine.

Having firmly established the brother of Ravan on the throne of Ceylone, Ram prepared to return to his hereditary dominions; but, as an immense slaughter had been made of Hanuman's army, and as, without their restoration to life, he must henceforth have reigned a king without subjects, Ram, exerting the omnipotent power of an incarnate deity, *re-animated* their lifeless bodies: another glaring proof that the Metempsychosis was the doctrine principally intended to be inculcated by this distinguished Avatar. The resuscitated army then urged back their course, to the continent, over the bridge erected by their labour; and the legend relates, that, at the command of Ram, the principal stones that formed it were carried back, by the apes, to the mountains whence they had been hewn; but, unfortunately for its veracity, those stones, of the vast dimensions stated above, still remain, and incontestably prove, what I have all along asserted to be the basis of the Indian legends, the history of some stupendous convulsion of nature, or other physical phænomenon, blended with the detail of some great historical fact, such as is likely to have taken place in the infancy of the world, when half mankind, inflamed by religious feuds, or animated by the thirst of power, was embattled against the other half. At that period when the daring CUTHITE GENIUS was in its full career of glory; for, as I have elsewhere expressed myself,* and the reader will, I hope, pardon the insertion, in this page, of a passage so remarkably apposite; "it was the peculiar delight of that enterprizing race to erect stupendous edifices, to excavate long subterraneous passages from the living rock, to form vast lakes, to extend over the *hollow of adjoining mountains magnificent arches for aqueducts and bridges*; in short, to attempt whatever was hazardous and difficult; and to carry into execution whatever appeared, to the rest of mankind, impracticable. Assyria and Egypt were covered with these wonders in sculpture, and prodigies in art, which their bold invention planned and their persevering industry executed. It was they who

* Indian Antiquities, vol. iv. p. 510.

built the tower of Belus, and raised the pyramids of Egypt; it was they who formed the grottoes near the Nile, and scooped the caverns of Salsette and Elephanta. Their skill in mechanical powers, to this day, astonishes posterity, who are unable to conceive by what means stones, thirty, forty, and even sixty, feet in length, and from twelve to twenty feet in breadth, could ever be reared to that wonderful point of elevation at which they were seen, by Pocock and Norden, in the ruined temples of Balbec and the Thebais. Those, that compose the pagodas of India, are scarcely less wonderful in magnitude and elevation, and they evidently display the bold architecture of the same indefatigable artificers."

Ram, having refreshed his native forces in the kingdom of Hanuman, and restored to that depopulated realm its former inhabitants, marched on to his capital in Bahar in all the majesty of a god and all the splendor of a conqueror. He also prevailed on Hanuman, after making Suckeridge, the prince of apes and his oldest general, his vice-gerent during his absence, with a select band of those mountaineers, to accompany him thither; and it was, probably, in their progress to Owdh, that the rites adopted afterwards in the Greek *Dionysia*, or feasts of Bacchus, (in other words the Indian Bhagavat,) were first celebrated. Harnessed tigers (an animal, it should be observed, abundant in India, but not known in Greece) dragged the chariot of the triumphant Ram; the sprightly notes of the Indian pipe and tabor were heard responsive to the wild airs of the Indian Bacchæ, attendants on the recovered Sita; and the louder cymbals poured their melody in unison with the antic dance of the jocund satyrs. Ram, at some distance from his capital, was met by his enraptured parents and relatives, who brought him, in profusion, all the rich and splendid offerings usually made in India at the shrine of royalty crowned with conquest; showers of rose and other sweet-scented waters were sprinkled over himself and his faithful band, who had shared his toils and his glory; the social betel was lavishly distributed, and the choicest perfumes of Asia were burned to their honour, refreshing the

languid spirit, and filling the air with ambrosial fragrance. Ram flourished, according to the Hindoo legends, eleven thousand lunar years on the throne of Owdh; at the end of which, he retired with his wife to the Vaicontha, or paradise of Veeshnu, leaving two sons behind him, CHUS and LAVAN, who inherited his virtues and jointly shared his regal honours.* With Ramachandra expired the TRETA-YUG, or second age of the world; in which, one-third part of mankind became reprobate; a period containing three Avatars, consonant to their gradual decrease in every successive age, and consisting of 2,400,000 years: though I must again remind the reader, that these exaggerated calculations are nothing more than astronomical cycles, founded on the basis of the precession of equinoxes of fifty-four seconds, more or less times repeated, according to the number of Avatars in each Yug.

The Epic poem of the Ramayan, in which these facts are recorded, is stated to be the noblest production of the Indian muse, and the Iliad of that country; and is said to be highly distinguished for the unity of its action, the magnificence of its imagery, and the elegance of its style.† Not having that poem before me, I have been obliged, from secondary sources, to draw that information which I would gladly have imbibed from the fountain-head. Those sources, though secondary, are authentic; and perhaps the European reader may be better pleased with the general detail presented to him above, than with minute accounts of those incantations that fill the Indian legends, and the combats of giants; which, however they may delight and astonish the Oriental literati, have no charms for the polished scholar of western climes, and are justly consigned to puerile reading. Enough of this species of romance has been inserted to justify our suspicion, that from this Indian history the Greeks

* Roger. p. 166; Sonnerat, vol. i. p. 26; Baldæus apud Churchill, vol. iii. p. 865; and Sir William Jones, in Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 123.

† Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 258.

took their accounts of the war carried on by Jupiter (Veeshnu, Seeva, Eendra; for, all resemble him in their attributes) against the Titans, or earth-born giants, from whose blood, when slain by the arrows of Apollo, sprang up serpents armed with deadly venom. At the same time there cannot possibly be any greater resemblance imagined, than what Ravan and his gigantic brethren bear to Typhon, Briareus, and the rest of them, with their innumerable heads breathing fire, and their hundred arms tearing up mountains and hurling rocks at the Pater Omnipotens and the opposing deities. The very same kind of conflict is reported, in p. 99, preceding, to have been maintained by Parasu-Rama with the giants, his opponents, in Cusha-dweepa; in which, mountains and rocks were reciprocally hurled, and darted serpents enfolded the daring rebels combating against the incarnate Veeshnu; but, as we have already stated it to be our decided opinion, that Parasu-Rama and Ramchandra are only varied representations of one person, the great Cuthite, our hypothesis is greatly confirmed by this striking coincidence of facts. The physical appearance, also, of Ceylone, warrants a conjecture, that volcanic eruptions have been numerous, in ancient times, in that island, and have aided the inflamed imagination of the sublime Valmic, in composing the Ramayan. It is unnecessary to enter into a minute comparison of Rama with the Grecian Dionysius; it is the general feature of resemblance in the two heroes which is here contended for; yet should not the two remarkable titles, assigned the latter, of *Dithyrambus*, or twice entering the gate of life, and *Bimater*, or having two mothers, be forgotten; which doubtless allude to Rama's having been twice born, conformably with the doctrine which his Avatar throughout inculcates, — the Metempsychosis. As I have no exact data by which to ascertain the length of time which the war of Lanca endured, we may fairly infer, from another of the Greek titles of Dionysius, that it lasted three years, since the feasts of the Trieterica were expressly instituted because he returned from his Indian expedition after three years absence; which information might have been

conveyed to the Greeks from India by written documents, or by traditions relating to the war of Lanca. His title of *Nisæus*, from Nisa, of *Eleutherios*, the deliverer, and of *Thriambos*, the triumphant, are all peculiarly connected with the character of this Indian Avatar, and forcibly call to our recollection the exploits of Rama.

GENERAL REFLECTIONS ON THE HISTORY OF THE RAMAS.

Having repeatedly intimated that the events, recorded in the lives of the three Ramas, are probably the actions of one man, named Rama, the son of Cush; and that the whole of these wars are the contests for dominion of the first colonists, inflamed by religious feuds; I rejoice in having it in my power, in part, to confirm each assertion by the authority of the sacred books themselves: for, in regard to Parasu-Rama, we find this Avatar originally founded on a domestic dispute between the families of two renowned sages of the patriarchal race, whose names and actions are recorded in the Dissertation of Mr. Wilford.

" Violent feuds had long subsisted between the family of GAUTAMA, on one side, and those of VISWAMITRA and JAMADAGNI, on the other: the kings of Cusha-dweepa within took the part of GAUTAMA; and the Haihayas, a very powerful nation in that country, (whom I believe to have been Persians,) were inveterate against JAMADAGNI, whom they killed after defeating his army. Among the confederates in Cusha-dweepa were the Romacas, or those dressed in hair-cloth; the Sacas, and a tribe of them called Sacasenas; the Hindoos of the Khettri class, who then lived on the banks of the Chacshus, or Oxus; the Parasicas, a nation beyond the Nile; the Barbaras, or people of Nubia; the inhabitants of Camboja; the Ciratas and Haritas, two tribes of the Pallis; and the Yavanas, or ancestors of the Greeks. These allies entered India, and defeated the troops of VIS-

WAMITRA in the county called Yudha-Bhumi, or the Land of War, now Yehud, between the Indus and the Behat."

From this immense force, assembled together from every quarter of Asia to revenge a domestic insult, we may collect to what a wide extent, and with what relentless fury, these conflicts in the infant world were carried on, as well as the vast limits of the empire of Hindostan in those very ancient periods; for, the hostile forces we see pour into India from the distant Nile, on the one hand, and the frozen Oxus, on the other; on the banks of which latter river the Khettri tribe are expressly said at that period to have dwelt; a circumstance which fully justifies all that has been previously urged concerning the residence of the Hindoos having formerly been in a more northern situation, and at the same time explains General Vallancey's account of the Southern Scythians and their early maturity in arts and sciences; for, there can be no doubt that those Southern Scythians were Brahmins. Parasu-Rama is recorded to have been the son of Jamadagni, and it was to repel and subdue this powerful junction of half the forces of Asia that the *descent of the deity* in his person became necessary; for, no other arm was able to exterminate so numerous a host. Considered in this, which is the true, light, all the mythological difficulty vanishes, and the Avatars become perfectly intelligible; for, it is the Deity interposing to prevent the annihilation of an oppressed and holy family; and, hence, he is said to have issued forth to mortal view in that of Jamadagni. This race, it should also be considered, though eminently holy, was also royal, the genealogical arrangement of its sovereigns being inserted, by Mr. Wilford, in the Asiatic Researches; and this circumstance incontestably proves, that the monarchs of the first Asiatic dynasties exercised the two-fold function of KING and PROPHET.

CHAPTER II.

Intended as introductory to the subsequent History of CREESHNA, *incarnate in the eighth* AVATAR, *and containing a summary Account of all the distinguished native Sovereigns of Hindostan, from* SATYAURATA-MENU *to* JUDISHTER, *who is considered by the Brahmins as cotemporary with* CREESHNA.

THE Bhagavat, from which the subsequent life of Creeshna is taken, is one of the most distinguished, for sublimity and beauty, of the eighteen Puranas, or Pooraun̄s, written by the holy sage VYASA, whose celebrated pen composed the great poem of the Mahabbarat. It lays claim, therefore, to the highest antiquity that any Indian composition can boast; and, though we may not allow it to be four thousand years old, which is the date assigned to the Mahabbarat in Mr. Wilkins's Bhagvat-Geeta.* yet there is ample evidence to prove its existence not many centuries later than that æra. The Geeta itself is an Episode of the Mahabbarat, and it is the divine Creeshna that inculcates the precepts it contains on the mind of his friend and disciple Arjoon. But, that the reader may be able to form a better judgement concerning both the wonderful being whose history is about to be detailed, and the authenticity and age of the book whence it has been extracted, I shall here present him, by way of introduction, with an extract or two from Sir William Jones's celebrated Dissertation on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India. There is exhibited, in the life of this Indian deity, such a strange mixture of the *sublime* and the *puerile*, as for a long time excited in my mind a great degree of doubt whether I should publish it in this collective form, or give

* Geeta, p. 5.

an abridgement of it, inserting only the most remarkable facts. An impious parallel, however, having been recently attempted to be drawn, by a celebrated French writer, between the life and miracles of Creeshna and those of Christ, between which there are certainly to be traced very striking lines of resemblance; and well there may, if, as Sir William Jones was of opinion, and as I sincerely believe, there are, in the Bhagavat, interpolations from the *spurious gospels*, which might, in the earliest æras of Christianity, have found their way to India; I conceived myself bound by duty to give it unabridged, to avoid the suspicion of purposed mutilation to serve a favourite system.

"Their great divinity Creeshna," says Sir William Jones, "according to the Indians, passed a life of a most extraordinary and incomprehensible nature. He was the son of DEVACI, by VASUDEVA; but his birth was concealed through fear of the tyrant CANSA, to whom it had been predicted that a child, born at that time in that family, would destroy him. He was fostered, therefore, in Mathura, by an honest herdsman, surnamed NANDA, or *happy*, and his amiable wife YASODA, who, like another Pales, was constantly occupied in her pastures and her dairy. In their family were a multitude of young Gopas, or cow-herds, and beautiful Gopias, or milkmaids, who were his play-fellows during his infancy; and, in his early youth, he selected nine damsels as his favourites, with whom he passed his gay hours in dancing, sporting, and playing on his flute. Both he and the three RAMAS are described as youths of perfect beauty; but the princesses of Hindostan, as well as the damsels of NANDA's farm, were passionately in love with CREESHNA, who continues to this hour the darling god of the Indian women. The sect of the Hindoos, who adore him with enthusiastic, and almost exclusive, devotion, have broached a doctrine, which they maintain with eagerness, and which seems general in these provinces, that he was distinct from all the Avatars, who had only an *ansa*, or portion of his divinity; while CREESHNA was the person of VEESH-

NU himself in a human form. Hence they considered the third Rama, his elder brother, as the eighth Avatar, invested with an emanation of his divine radiance; and, in the principal Sanscreet dictionary, compiled *about two thousand years ago*, CREESHNA, VASUDEVA, GOVINDA, and other names of the shepherd-god, are intermixed with epithets of NARAYAN, or the Divine Spirit. Creeshna was not less heroic than lovely; and, when a boy, slew the terrible serpent Calija, with a number of giants and monsters: at a more advanced age, he put to death his cruel enemy CANSA; and, having taken under his protection the king JUDHISHTHIR and the other Pandoos, who had been grievously oppressed by the Curus and their tyrannical chief, he kindled the war, described in the great Epic Poem, entitled the Mahabbarat; at the prosperous conclusion of which he returned to his heavenly seat in Vaicontha, having left the instructions, comprised in the Geeta, with his disconsolate friend ARJUN, whose grandson became sovereign of India."

In another place he observes as follows. "That the *name* of CRISHNA, and the general outline of his story, were long anterior to the birth of our Saviour, and probably to the *time of Homer*, we know very certainly; yet the celebrated poem, entitled Bhagavat, which contains a prolix account of his life, is filled with narratives of a most extraordinary kind, but strangely variegated and intermixed with poetical decorations. The incarnate deity of the Sanscreet romance was cradled, as it informs us, among herdsmen; but it adds, that he was educated among them, and passed his youth in playing with a party of milk-maids. A tyrant, at the time of his birth, *ordered all new-born males to be slain*; yet this wonderful babe was preserved by biting the breast, instead of sucking the poisoned nipple, of a nurse commissioned to kill him. He performed amazing, but ridiculous, miracles in his infancy; and, at the age of seven years, held up a mountain on the tip of his little finger; he saved multitudes, partly by his arms and partly by his miraculous powers; he raised the dead, by descending for that pur-

pose to the lowest regions; he was the meekest and best-tempered of beings, washed the feet of the Brahmins, and preached very nobly, indeed, and sublimely, but always in their favour; he was pure and chaste in reality, but exhibited an appearance of excessive libertinism, and had wives or mistresses too numerous to be counted; lastly, he was benevolent and tender, yet fomented and conducted a terrible war. This motley story must induce an opinion that the spurious Gospels, which abounded in the first age of Christianity, had been brought to India, and the wildest parts of them repeated to the Hindoos, who ingrafted them on the old fable of CESAVA, the APOLLO of Greece."

In my opinion the story of Creeshna contains a great deal of the ancient mystic theology of Hindostan, interwoven with no small portion of its early history; for, it introduces to us Judishter, the first acknowledged sovereign of the country, and enters into considerable detail concerning the actions of the third Rama, his elder brother, who, in fact, is often considered as the eighth Indian Avatar, but whom I throughout consider as only a different representation of the great hero and conqueror of that name. Some traditional account of *the fall* is manifestly displayed in the combat of Creeshna with the great envenomed serpent Calija: the serpent's twining his enormous folds around his body, at the same time *biting his foot*, and Creeshna's finally trampling *with his foot on the crushed head of the serpent*, are incontrovertible proofs of the truth of this observation. The whole appears to me to be written in the very same spirit with the mystic poetry of Hafez, the devout sensualist of Persia, in which the mind, wrought up to a high degree of enthusiasm, seeks, in the most delightful terrestrial objects, images by which to represent the Deity himself, and to express the raptures of religion. For instance, Hafez frequently uses the romantic phrase, *the wine of devotion*, and speaks of the happiness arising from the love of his Maker with the same transport, and nearly in the same language, as he talks of the *fruition of his mistress*. However this mode of ex-

pression may shock the feelings of European divines, except, indeed, the sect of the *illuminati*, it is very prevalent among Asiatic theologists, whose devotion seems to want the assistance of external objects to animate and invigorate it.

Having finished, in the former chapter, the history of Ram-Chandra, and now approaching near to the age of Judishter, who was contemporary with Creeshna, and the first regular acknowledged sovereign of Hindostan after the age of fable, I will attempt to present the reader, as far as my resources enable me, with a short summary of the genuine history to this period of the sovereigns of Hindostan of presumed mortal birth. I have already declared my opinion, in general, of the solar and lunar sovereigns; that they are, for the most part, imaginary, and their dynasties the artful fabrication of astronomical priests, yet are not all to be indiscriminately rejected. Of the names enumerated below, although they also arrogate the distinguished title of Surya-Bans and Chandra-Bans, and are ranged in order under those respective dynasties; and, among them, although Bharata, in particular, is recorded, in the Brahmin annals, to have reigned during the enormous period of twenty-seven thousand years (the supposed long revolution of the celestial bodies); of these and their history some scanty glimmering of information has been obtained, and that shall not be withholden from the curious reader. Vaivaswata, or Menu, we have seen, is the fountain of both dynasties. Who were Ichswacu, Vicuchsa, Cucutstha, and their descendants, amounting in number to fifty-five princes, down to Rama in the solar line, their name and history under the title of Cush* and Cuthites, given, as far as was practicable, in the preceding pages, have, I trust, satisfactorily evinced. They were the more immediate and noble descendants in the direct male line of the great Satyaurata. They were the first colonizers of the world, though their exploits

* The reader is requested to look back with attention to the lists in pages 58, 59, and 60, preceding.

are detailed in the Pooraums in a style the most exaggerated, and in a manner the most romantic. It is those of the lunar dynasty with whom we are now principally concerned; those who were the offspring of Buddha, the planet Mercury, by Ila, the daughter of the personage who was saved in the *bahitron*, or ark; Noah, called Ilus by Sanchoniathon.* Of the third in this dynasty, NAHUSHA, (if, indeed, he were not the same as Rama himself,) the exploits have already been amply described. Yayati, the fifth in order, is said to have obtained the sovereignty of the world, to have had five sons, to have appointed Dushmanta,† the youngest of them, also said to have been the sovereign of the whole earth, to succeed him in India, and to have allotted inferior kingdoms to the other four, who had offended him: part of the Deccan, or the south, to YADU, the ancestor of CREESHNA; the north to ANU; the east to DRUHYA; and the west to TURVASU.

OF THE YADUS, YADOOS, OR YADAVAS.

Of all these enumerated above, the posterity of YADU became the most considerable and most honoured; for, in this line Creeshna himself was born. A part of their history shall presently be given by Mr. Wilford; the more interesting part, with the account of the total extinction of their race in India, will occur in the life of Creeshna. The Yadavas, situated in the south, are recorded to have been the first emigrants who, on account of the oppressions of Cansa, a sanguinary tyrant of their own race, fled from India, colonised, and gave their name to Ethiopia: they were prior in emigration to the PALLIS, who conquered Egypt in later times, and whose history has been given above at great length. They were sometimes called YATUS, in contempt, by their tyrant, and the reason assigned is as follows.

* Cumberland's Sanchoniathon, p. 25.

† Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 151.

"The origin of the YATUS, or YADUS," says Mr. Wilford, "is thus related in the sacred books. UGRASENA, or UGRA, was father of DEVACI, who was CREESHNA's mother. His son CANSA, having imprisoned him and usurped his throne, became a merciless tyrant, and shewed a particular animosity against his kinsmen, the Yadavas, or descendants of YADU, to whom, when any of them approached him, he used to say *Yatu!* or *begone*, so repeatedly, that they acquired the nickname of Yatu, instead of the respectable patronymic by which they had been distinguished. CANSA made several attempts to destroy the children of DEVACI; but CREESHNA, having been preserved from his machinations, lived to kill the tyrant and restore UGRASENA, who became a sovereign of the world. During the infancy, however, of CREESHNA, the persecuted Yadavas emigrated from India, and retired to the mountains of the exterior Cusha-Dweepa, or Abyssinia: their leader Yatu was properly entitled YADAVENDRA, or prince of Yadavas, whence those mountains acquired the same appellation. Those Indian emigrants are described in the Pooraums as a blameless, pious, and even a sacred, race; which is exactly the character given by the ancients to the genuine Ethiopians, who are said, by STEPHANUS, of Byzantium, by EUSEBIUS, by PHILOSTRATUS, by EUSTATHIUS, and others, to have come originally from India under the guidance of AETUS, or Yatu; but they confound him with king AIT, who never was there. YADABENDRA (for so his title is generally pronounced) seems to be the wise and learned Indian, mentioned in the Paschal Chronicle by the name of ANDUBARIUS. The king or chief of the Yatus is correctly named YATUPA, or, in the western pronunciation, JATUPA, and their country would, in a derivative form, be called Jatupeya. Now it is known that the native Ethiopians give their country, even at this day, the names of Itiopia and Zaitiopia. There can be little or no doubt that YATUPA was the king ÆTHIOPS of the Greek mythologists, who call him the son of VULCAN; and it will be shewn, in a subsequent part of this essay, that the VULCAN of Egypt was

also considered by the Hindoos as an *avantara*, or subordinate incarnation, of MAHADEVA."

In another part of his Dissertation the same writer observes, "the most venerable emigrants from India were the Yadavas; they were the blameless and pious Ethiopians, whom Homer mentions, and calls the remotest of mankind. Part of them, say the old Hindoo writers, remained in this country, and hence we read of two Ethiopian nations, the Western and the Oriental: some of them lived far to the east, and they are the Yadavas who stayed in India; while others resided far to the west, and they are the sacred race who settled on the shores of the Atlantic. We are positively assured, by HERODOTUS, that the Oriental Ethiopians were Indians, and hence we may infer, that India was known to Greeks, in the age of HOMER, by the name of Eastern Ethiopia."

To leave, for the present, the oppressed Yadavas and return to our examination of the lunar dynasty: — the most distinguished of all its puissant sovereigns was Bharat, the great ancestor of Judishter, more generally considered and recorded as the first universal sovereign of India of mortal birth. He flourished in the early period of the Duaapar-Yug, and, in testimony of his extensive power, the whole country was, in very ancient periods, denominated, from this prince, BHARATA-VERSH. Bharata-Versh, according to Mr. Wilkins,* at that remote period, included all the countries that, in the present division of the globe, are called India, extending from the borders of Persia to the extremity of China, and from the Snowy Mountains to the southern promontory; an empire vast and magnificent, indeed, if the description be accurate, and well deserving of the mighty contests for its dominion described in the Mahabbarat. The denomination of a country from a great monarch proves at least that such a monarch existed, and Sir William Jones has, in part, accounted for the extravagant assertion of his having reigned twenty-seven thou-

* Geeta, p. 23.

sand years, by the inability of the Brahmins to fill up a considerable interval of time that elapsed between his reign and that of his son and successor Vitatha. "This," adds Sir William, "they are, in some degree, compelled to do; for, if we suppose his life to have lasted no longer than that of other mortals, and admit VITATHA and the rest to have been his regular successors, we shall fall into a greater absurdity; for, then, if the generations in both lines were nearly equal, as they would naturally have been, we shall find JUDHISHTHIR, who reigned confessedly at the close of the brazen age, nine generations older than RAMA, before whose birth the silver age is allowed to have ended." After the name of BHARAT, therefore, in the chronological table, he has set an asterisk to denote a considerable chasm in the Indian history, and has inserted between brackets, as out of their places, his twenty-four successors, who reigned, if at all, in the following age, immediately before the war of the Mahabbarat.

Bharat is renowned in the Indian annals for justice and his love of his subjects, and heaven is said, in reward, to have, in reality, granted him a very extended reign. Vitatha, we have seen, succeeded him in the kingdom, the capital of which, in those ancient times, was Hastnapoor, or *the place of elephants*.

OF THE CURUS, OR KOOROOS, AND OF THE PANDOOS.

The mighty Curu, or Koor, the ancestor of the Kooroos, was the sixth monarch in descent from Bharat, and, according to the Ayeen Akbery,* conferred his name on the venerated lake Koorket, in Upper Hindostan, to which sacred reservoir, at certain seasons of the year, multitudes of devotees flock from the remotest quarters of the empire: it may also derive an additional sanction from its being

* Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 108.

the scene of the war of the Mahabbarat. Earliest distinguished among these, after six descents from Koor, flourished a prince named Veecheetraveerya, who had two celebrated sons, the first DREETRARASHTRA, and the second PANDOO. Dreetrarashtra had one hundred and one sons, the eldest of whom was Doorjoodhen: the hundred and one brethren are those properly denominated the Kooroos, whose oppression of their relations, the descendants of Pandoo, and subsequent conflicts with them for empire, form the basis of the history of the Mahabbarat. The eldest of these brethren, Doorjoodhen, contrived to ascend the throne during the life-time of his father, who was rendered incapable by blindness of governing, and laboured to exclude the Pandoos from every hope of succeeding to it, although Pandoo, his uncle, had actually held the Indian sceptre for a considerable period during the incapacity of his brother, through that accident which had, in fact, deprived himself and his posterity of all right to the throne. Pandoo himself had five sons, who are meant by Indian historians when they speak of the five Pandoos. Their names are Judishter, Bheema, Arjoon, Nacul, and Sahadeva. Doorjoodhen, determined to keep possession of his ill-gotten power, used every possible effort to subdue, and even extirpate, them. He attempted to destroy them by setting fire to the palace which Dreetrarashtra, their uncle, had built in a remote city for their more secure residence: they, however, escaped unhurt. He then persecuted them from province to province throughout Hindostan; but their fortitude and generosity every where procured them friends, and enabled them to triumph over his perfidious designs. At length, despairing to effect their destruction, Doorjoodhen affected to relent and be reconciled to them, and offered to share with them the kingdom. His proposals were accepted, and Judishter, as the eldest, had the kingdom assigned to him, of which Indrapoor, or Delhi, was the capital, while Doorjoodhen continued to retain that of Hastnapoor. By his judicious laws the former greatly improved his own kingdom; while, by his valour, he considerably enlarged its

bounds. Doorjoodhen was inflamed with envy at the renown of his rival, and more particularly as multitudes of his own subjects, even the Kooroos themselves, disgusted with his tyranny, had taken shelter under the more just and mild government of Judishter. He dared not, however, in any public manner manifest the latent rancour that burned in his heart; but, skilled in perfidious stratagems, he invited Judishter, his brothers, and their whole court, to a great banquet, at which he put in practice a project more fatal than any which the sword could have promoted. The ancient Indians were devoted to games of chance; and chess, among others, is known to have been a game of Indian origin: at one of these games, by means of false dice, Doorjoodhen contrived to win from the Pandoos all their property of every kind which they possessed. In the ardour of play, such was the infatuation of the latter, that not only the kingdom of Judishter was staked and lost, but their very freedom of agency was sacrificed, and they submitted to the hard terms of going for twelve years into voluntary exile; and, such was their high sense of honour, such their undeviating probity, that they punctually fulfilled the compact to which they had so rashly agreed.

On their return from that exile, the unfeeling despot relaxed not from the severity of his oppressive conduct towards the Pandoos; and, so far was he from again bestowing upon them any part of his vast domain, that he would not even grant them the trifling donation of five villages, which they solicited for their respective residence. Resentment at this unworthy treatment roused the sons of Pandoo and their adherents to open rebellion, and they took the field with a determination as well to recover their birth-right as to exact ample vengeance for their accumulated wrongs. Their claims were supported by their friends: their excellent character and the justice of their cause, added to the general abhorrence in which the usurper was holden, armed in their favour many of the most distinguished rajahs. Creeshna, also, at the head of the formidable tribe of the Yadavas, fought on their side. Bheeshma, the aged brother of Veecheetra-

Veerya, was the supreme commander, under Doorjoodhen, of the Kooroos; and Bheem, under Judishter, of the Pandoos. The Kooroos were far superior to their adversaries in point of numbers: they are said to have brought into the plains of Koorket an army of such immense magnitude as exceeds all belief in that infant state of mankind, and concerning which, therefore, it would be idle to enter into any minute detail. — By those exaggerated accounts the historian certainly meant to impress his readers with an idea that all the great powers of Hindostan were engaged in the war of the Mahabbarat, and it is probable that they all were more or less concerned in it; but, when he adds, that, out of the immense multitude thus assembled in arms to decide the fate of India, after a battle that lasted, with only short intermissions, during eighteen days, twelve persons alone escaped the general slaughter, he forfeits all claim to serious belief; outraged humanity shudders at the horrible tale; we immediately lose sight of the grave historian, and, with joy, recollect that the Mahabbarat is properly an *historical poem*. Among the twelve survivors, we are not displeased to find the five virtuous sons of Pandoo, nor are we surprised to meet with the name of the incarnate deity Creeshna, whose potent arm is presumed to have been the principal means of accomplishing the destruction of the Kooroos. The result of the conflict was, that, Doorjoodhen and his hundred brethren being slain, Judishter, without opposition, ascended the throne which by right of inheritance belonged to him; and, after a peaceful reign of thirty-six years, was induced, by his religious turn of mind, to relinquish it to his brother Arjoon, and retire from the splendour and pleasures of a court to practise the rigid duties of prayer and mortification in the solitudes of the desert. This great battle is recorded to have taken place near the close of the Dwaapar Yug,* after which the Avatar of Creeshna terminates in the manner related in the following account of his life. To the proper understanding of

* Ayeen Akbery, vol. ii. p. 112.

that life, and many of the events and characters occurring in the course of the narration, the above historical sketch of the succession of native sovereigns of India, in those earlier periods, when history was emerging, but had not yet wholly emerged, from romance, however concise and imperfect, is absolutely necessary. The promised translation of the Mahabbarat, by Mr. Wilkins, when it shall appear, will doubtless dissipate much of the darkness that shades the remote period of Indian history above alluded to; in the mean time some detached fragments of it, by Mr. Halhed, from the Persian version, by the brother of Abul Fazil, may not be unacceptable to the curious in Indian researches, and will be found in the subsequent pages.

To return to the more particular consideration of those parts of the life of Creeshna which are above alluded to by Sir William Jones, which have been paralleled with some of the leading events in the life of our blessed Saviour, and are, in fact, considered by him as interpolations from the spurious Gospels; I mean more particularly his miraculous birth at midnight; the chorus of Devatas that saluted with hymns the divine infant as soon as born; his being cradled among shepherds, to whom were first made known those stupendous feats that stamped his character with divinity; his being carried away by night and concealed in a region remote from the scene of his birth, from fear of the tyrant Cansa, whose destroyer it was predicted he would prove, and who, therefore, ordered all the male children born at that period to be slain; his battle, in his infancy, with the dire envenomed serpent Calija, and crushing his head with his foot; his miracles in succeeding life; his raising the dead; his descending to Hades, and his return to Vaicontha, the proper paradise of Veeshnu; all these circumstances of similarity are certainly very surprising, and, upon any other hypothesis than that offered by Sir William Jones, at first sight, seem very difficult to be solved. But should that solution, from the allowed antiquity of the name of *Crishna*, and the general outline of his story, confessedly anterior

to the birth of Christ, and probably as old as Homer,* as well as the apparent reluctance of the haughty self-conceited Brahmin to borrow any part of his creed, or rituals, or legends, from foreigners visiting India, not be admitted by some of my readers as satisfactory, I have to request their attention to the following particulars, which they will peruse with all the solemn consideration due to a question of such high moment.

And, — 1st, with respect to the name of *Crishna*, (for, so it must be written to bear the asserted analogy to the name of Christ,) Mr. Volney, after two or three pages of unparalleled impiety, in which he resolves the whole life, death, and resurrection, of the Messiah into an ingenious allegory, allusive to the growth, decline, and renovation, of the solar heat during its annual revolution; and after asserting that by the Virgin, his mother, is meant the celestial sign Virgo, in the bosom of which, at the summer solstice, the sun anciently appeared to the Persian Magi to rise, and was thus depicted in their astrological pictures as well as in the Mithratic caverns; after thus impiously attempting to mythologize away the grand fundamental doctrines of the Christian code, our infidel author adds, that the SUN was sometimes called *Chris*, or Conservator, that is, the Saviour; and hence, he observes, the Hindoo god *Chris-en*, or *Christna*, and the Christian *Chris-tos*, the son of Mary.† Now, whatever ingenuity there may be displayed in the former part of this curious investigation, into which I cannot now enter, I can confidently affirm there is not a syllable of truth in the orthographical derivation; for, Crishna, not Chris-en, nor Christna,‡ (as to serve a worthless cause, subversive of civil society, he artfully perverts the word,) has not the least approach in signification to the

* See Sir William Jones, cited above in p. 257, who always writes the word Crishna, though by me, throughout, written Creeshna, in conformity to Mr. Wilkins's orthography, which, at the commencement of the Indian Antiquities, I professed to follow, and have uniformly adopted.

† Volney's Ruins, p. 290. ‡ Ibid.

Greek word Christos, *anointed*, in allusion to the kingly office of the Hebrew Messiah; since this appellative simply signifies, as we shall presently demonstrate, *black*, or *dark blue*, and was conferred on the Indian god solely on account of his *black complexion*. It has, therefore, no more connection with the name of our blessed Saviour, supposed, by this writer, to be derived from it, than the humble Mary of Bethlehem has with the Isis of Egypt, the original Virgo of the zodiac; or Joseph, as there asserted, has with the obsolete constellation of Præsepe Jovis, or stable of Jove, as, in his rage for derivation, he ridiculously asserts. — 2. Let it, in the next place, be considered that Creeshna, so far from being the son of a virgin, is declared to have had a father and mother *in the flesh*, and to have been the *eighth* child of Devaci and Vasudeva. How inconceivably different this from the sanctity of the immaculate conception of Christ! — 3. That it has been, from the earliest periods, the savage custom of the despots of Asia, for the sake of extirpating one dreaded object, to massacre all the males born in a particular district, and the history of Moses himself exhibits a glaring proof how anciently and how relentlessly it was practised. — 4. In his contest with the great serpent Calija, circumstances occur which, since the story is, in great part, *mythological*, irresistibly impel me to believe, that, in that, as in many other portions of this surprising legend, there is a reference intended to some traditional accounts, descended down to the Indians from the patriarchs, and current in Asia, of the *fall of man*, and the consequent well-known denunciation against the serpentine tempter. — 5. In regard to the numerous miracles wrought by Creeshna, it should be remembered, that miracles are never wanting to the decoration of an Indian romance; they are, in fact, the life and soul of the vast machine; nor is it at all a subject of wonder that the dead should be raised to life in a history expressly intended, like all other sacred fables of Indian fabrication, for the propagation and support of the whimsical doctrine of the Metempsychosis. — The above is the most satisfactory reply in my power to give to such determined

sceptics as Mr. Volney, who resolve the whole life of Creeshna into a history of the operations of THE SUN, on purpose to degrade to mere mythology the character and miracles of Christ, to which, in some parts, an obscure resemblance may be traced.

It is not, however, to writers of his cast that this work is principally addressed. To the devout Christian, who, in humble confidence, exalts his retrospective glance through the darkness of past ages, and there traces the vestiges of Providence, I will venture to unfold what appears to me to be the genuine truth in this obscure business, and the explanation which I propose will turn most forcibly against the sceptic the tide of his own arguments. The life of Creeshna, in fact, is not merely *mythological*, no more than it can be considered as purely *historical*. It is an evident mixture of both. It appears to me that the Hindoos, idolizing some eminent character of antiquity, distinguished, in the early annals of their nation, by heroic fortitude and exalted piety, have applied to that character those ancient traditional accounts of an INCARNATE GOD, or, as they not improperly term it, *an Avatar*, which had been delivered down to them from their ancestors, the virtuous Noachidæ, to *descend*, amidst the darkness and ignorance of succeeding ages, at once to reform and instruct mankind. We have the more solid reason to affirm this of the Avatar of Creeshna, because it is allowed to be the most illustrious of them all; since we have learned, that, in the *seven* preceding Avatars, the deity brought only an *ansa*, or portion of his divinity; but, in the *eighth*, he descended in all the plenitude of the godhead, and was Veeshnu himself in a human form.* From what other source than this could originally have sprung the fanciful doctrine of *Avatars*, or heavenly descents, a god incarnate, a deliverer of the oppressed earth from the yoke of tyrants, and the rage of dæmons, armed for the destruction of mankind? The path upon which I am about to enter, contrary to my original intention, which

* See page 256 preceding, in the last line.

was to pass rapidly over a subject of great apparent hazard and delicacy, is somewhat devious and perplexed; but I will not shrink from the more extended investigation of this important question. An affected delicacy *here* would be a criminal desertion of the station which I have taken, as *the historian of the antiquities of India and the Higher Asia, most interesting to mankind.* The field, however, is so wide, that I must solicit the patient attention of the public to a second introductory chapter to the Life of Creeshna; and, if it should appear to some of my readers a deviation from the direct historical tract, I have, in the subject itself, to plead at least as ample, many of them will think a far better, apology than could be urged by the most elegant historian* of the present century, for a digression artfully intended to undermine the national theology, and subvert the hope of immortality, founded on the benevolent Christian code, its firmest basis.

* Mr. Gibbon, in the two protracted chapters of his Roman History, which contain his inquiry into the causes of the progress and establishment of Christianity.

CHAPTER III.

Immemorial Traditions diffused over all the East, and derived from a patriarchal Source, concerning the Fall of Man, the original Promise, and a future Mediator: Traditions, recorded on the engraved Monuments and written Documents of Asia, and confirmed by the Pagan Oracles themselves, had taught the whole Gentile World to expect the Appearance of a sacred and illustrious Personage about the Period of Christ's Advent. — The AVATARS *themselves to be considered as the Result of the Predictions of the Noachidæ, concerning the Incarnation, in due Time, of the Saviour of the World. —* JOB'S *early and remarkable Prediction concerning the promised* REDEEMER. — *The Prophecy of* BALAAM, *that a* STAR *should rise out of Jacob, considered and compared with the Conduct of the* MAGI *who visited the Infant* JESUS *in Bethlehem. — The Probability stated that* ZOROASTER, *who, if not an apostate Jew himself, was certainly well acquainted with the Hebrew Doctrine and Scriptures, and had conversed at Babylon with the Prophet* DANIEL, *then a Captive at that Metropolis, did, when he visited the* BRACHMANES *in Company with his Patron Darius Hystaspes, impart to those Sages the Notions entertained, at that Day, by the Jews themselves, since so materially altered, concerning the Messiah, his humble Birth, and the Miracles he was to perform. — The Responses of the heathen Oracles, as the Times of the Messiah approached, and the Sentiments of heathen Writers, founded upon the Sibylline Oracles, detailed. — The Mission of St. Thomas and his Disciples to Parthia and the Eastern Regions of Asia, combined with the Report of the Magi on their Return, confirmed, beyond all Doubt, the Truth of the primitive Traditions, and induced the Brahmins to interpolate the ancient History of Creeshna, the Indian Preserver, either from Con-*

viction, or with a View to exalt the Character of that Deity, with Extracts both from the REAL *and the* SPURIOUS GOSPELS.

FROM the earliest post-diluvian age to that in which the Messiah appeared, together with the traditions which so expressly recorded *the fall of the human race* from a state of original rectitude and felicity, there appears, from an infinite variety of hieroglyphic monuments and of written documents, (some of which have perished in the lapse of time, but many of which remain incontestable proofs of the fact here asserted,) there appears, I say, to have prevailed, from generation to generation, throughout all the regions of the Higher Asia, an uniform belief, that, in the course of revolving ages, there should arise a *sacred personage*, a *mighty deliverer of mankind* from the thraldom of sin and of death. In fact, the memory of the grand original promise, that the *seed of the woman* should eventually crush *the serpent*, was carefully preserved in the breasts of the Asiatics; it entered deeply into their symbolic superstitions, and was engraved aloft amidst their mythologic sculptures. Every where was to be seen a god contending with his adversary, an envenomed serpent: Osiris, Hercules, Creeshna, and Apollo, are beheld alternately to aim at the slimy monster the victorious javelin, or wield the destroying club. The astronomers of Assyria exalted to the sphere the mysterious emblem, on the northern division of which conspicuously may be seen the *foot* of the celestial Hercules about to trample on the *head* of the dragon, while the Brahmins of India consecrated the image in the noblest of their Avatars.

In the ages immediately succeeding, the Chaldæan Job, induced by the same conviction, and doubtless animated by the spirit of prophecy, exultingly exclaimed, *I know that my* REDEEMER *liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see* GOD. Job xix. 25. The country of Job, it should be remembered, and that of the diviner Balaam, whose prediction follows

next in order, in the pagan world, to that of Job, are both on the confines of the region in which these expectations of a future Messiah were first indulged. That of the latter was Pethor, upon the Euphrates, a city which both sacred and profane geographers place in Upper Mesopotamia. He himself, in his prophecy, declares he came from *the mountains of the east*, those very mountains whence the Magi, pupils of the same school, issued, many centuries after, to adore the star which Balaam predicted, then *risen in Jacob.* The age in which Balaam flourished runs back very high into antiquity, nearly as high as that of Job himself; for, his benediction of Israel, against the bias of his own depraved heart, took place, according to Usher, in the year 1451 before Christ,* which is nearly 300 years before the Trojan war, and above 500 before Homer flourished; about which period, we have seen, Sir William Jones, speaking with great latitude, thinks the Bhagavat was composed; that is, the original parts of the poem, previous to its interpolation by the artful policy of the Brahmins, to make their favourite deity the prototype of the Christian Messiah. The Mesopotamian diviner, and the author of the Pooraun, derived from the same source, viz. the traditions preserved in the virtuous line of Shem, the general notion of an incarnate deity to spring from the bosom of time; but the peculiar and appropriate prediction of the Jewish Messiah, by the former, was the effect of *inspiration* by that Power whose providence can make the basest instrument subservient to the noblest purposes. Those striking particulars in the history of Creeshna, that seem to bear so direct a similitude to some parts of the life of Christ, were, in all probability, added, partly from the accounts circulated over the East by the Magi, who, following the traditions of their country, and guided by the appearance of the *risen star*, visited the Saviour of the world in Bethlehem, and partly from the SPURIOUS GOSPELS, which, in the

* Usher's Chronology, p. 34.

first ages of Christianity, were widely diffused over the East by numerous channels which we shall hereafter point out.

There is no occasion for my entering into discussions relative to all the difficulties that occur in the history and character of Balaam himself: the general answer to the principal objection has been given above: that he was selected by Providence an unworthy instrument to accomplish a grand design; and, as this is one of the earliest, so it is by no means one of the least animated, predictions of the great Personage prefigured by it. Summoned by Balak, the sovereign of Moab, and amply bribed by that monarch, according to an ancient superstitious practice of the Gentiles, solemnly to devote to slaughter the Israelitish army, assembled in superior multitudes to seize upon his dominions, after many vain efforts to curse the chosen people of God, the avaricious priest of Baal at length declared that no enchantment could prevail against Jacob, nor any divination against Israel. After three times extolling and blessing them, he prophetically breaks forth into the following rapturous exclamation: *Hear what Balaam, the diviner, saith; I shall see him,* (the Messiah,) *but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a* STAR *out of Jacob, and a* SCEPTRE *shall rise out of Israel.* The light of this STAR, now faintly glimmering, and now transcendently luminous, beamed through all the succeeding ages that rolled on from Moses to Malachi, the last of the prophets. During the four hundred years, however, which intervened between that prophet and its complete emersion, God left not himself without a witness in the pagan world. The ancient traditions began to be more widely diffused through Asia, and the heathen oracles themselves, as well those that were written, as those that were vocally given, gave their decided testimony to the *oracles of truth.*—The written oracles claim our first notice.

The most distinguished of the oracles, written in the ancient world, were those attributed to Zoroaster, whose history, whose place of residence, and whose doctrines, so similar, in many re-

spects, to those of the Brahmins, demand particular notice in this investigation; since it was probably, through the medium of the celebrated Archimagus of that name, who is known to have visited India 520 years before Christ, that the Brahmins first arrived at any knowledge of the true character, or any particulars of the history, of the REAL PERSONAGE to whom the ancient traditions, immemorially flourishing among them, pointed; and, by a comparison of which with those traditions, they were afterwards induced to interpolate their sacred books with passages extracted not only from the *genuine*, but the *spurious*, Gospels. But, before we proceed farther in the discussion, it will be necessary to obviate a difficulty which I see will be urged, arising from the presumed improbability that the haughty and self-conceited Brahmins would ever condescend to borrow any part of the religious creed of other nations, or blend it with that sublime, and, in their opinion, *perfect*, theological code given them from heaven by the voice of Brahma himself. It is, indeed, a question of considerable importance, and merits very minute and circumstantial inquiry. It is the more incumbent on me to enter fully into it, because it will probably be farther objected, that I, myself, while contending for the antiquity of the Indian doctrines and sciences, have, in various pages of this work and that introductory to it, repeatedly hinted at the absurdity of supposing that the Brahmins of Casi, or Benares, in Upper Hindostan, would ever descend so far from the conscious superiority of mental distinction to which they lay claim, as to receive instruction either in regard to the rites of religion or the principles of science from aliens, who might, from curiosity, commerce, or other motives, have been induced to visit the coasts of India.

When such sentiments have been avowed by me, they generally alluded to the disputed claim for priority in certain religious dogmas and scientific attainments between the Greek and Arabian philosophers and those of India. The general route of the former to India was by the ports of the peninsula, and, whatsoever influence their

conversation and manners might have on the Brahmins of the south, (a race at all times the most corrupted both in principles and practice from this influx of foreigners,) it is not probable that many of them reached the distant colleges of the Indian literati in those mountainous heights of Hindostan Proper, where, in ancient periods, they principally flourished, secure from the effect of those irruptions which in every age the envied riches of India brought upon its more southern provinces from successive conquerors. That, from those elevated regions, and in particular from Naugracut, on the mountains of Lahore, the whole stream of Indian theology and science originally flowed, is not only probable from the circumstance of their being a part of India nearest to the great Tauric range that runs through Asia, where the patriarchal schools were first instituted, and whence science was propagated by various channels through the world, but is proved, from the fact related by Ammianus Marcellinus, that, from the neighbouring mountains of Bactria, in whose capital of Balk, Zoroaster, or Zaratusht, had his school and principal fire-temple, that venerable sage, together with his patron Hystaspes, paid a visit to the Indian Magi, in the secluded regions of UPPER INDIA, whom he found buried in the deep solitude of their native forests, exercising their lofty genius in profound astronomical speculations and celebrating the awful sanctities of their religion. The solemn and mysterious rites and doctrines, which he there saw and learned, he afterwards taught his disciples, the Persian Magi, and they were delivered traditionally down to their posterity for a succession of ages.* This visit of Zaratusht to the Brachmanes evinces the intimate connection and correspondence between these two cele-

* Hystaspes, qui quum superioris Indiæ secreta fidentius penetraret, ad nemorosam quandam venerat solitudinem, cujus tranquillis silentiis præcelsa Bracmanorum ingenia potiuntur; eorumque monitu rationes mundani motus et siderum, purosque sacrorum ritus, quantum colligere potuit, eruditus, ex his quæ didicit, aliqua sensibus magorum infudit: quæ illi cum disciplinis præsentiendi futura, per suam quisque progeniem posteris ætatibus tradunt. Ammiani Marcellini, lib. 13.

brated sects of Eastern philosophers, which seems to have continued from that period, about five centuries before Christ, down to the seventh century after the Christian æra; when, on the irruption of the Arabian robbers, under the plea of establishing a purer religion in Persia, the miserable remains of the Magian sect, under the name of PARSEES, fled for security into the domains of their Indian brethren, and settled, where they now remain, in the western districts *Superioris Indiæ:* in fact, to that very country in which, above a thousand years before, the great Archimagus had both imparted and imbibed a considerable portion of his mystic devotion. It is remarkable that, previously to his entering on the public function, which, under the patronage of Darius Hystaspes, he assumed, the residence of Zoroaster had been in Media; (for, according to Porphyry, it was in the Median mountains adjoining to Persia that Zoroaster first consecrated a cavern to Mithra, or the SOLAR FIRE;*) and to *Azerbijian*, which means the *region of fire*, and is only another name for Media itself, the Hindoos, and all the ancient fire-worshippers of Asia, have been immemorially accustomed to make pilgrimages. It was on ELBURS, a mountain of that province, that the most ancient PYRÆIA were erected in honour of the bright and most perfect symbol of deity, and there they were night and day guarded by priests stationed near them for the pious purpose. It was not, however, on the heights of Elburs that the first fire-temples blazed; the perverted philosophy of Chaldæa, deserting its proper object, the *source itself of light and heat*, had long before induced its infatuated votaries to erect stupendous CHAMANIMS to that element, as the primary all-powerful agent in nature, in Ur, of Chaldæa; an act of insane impiety, which, attended as it was with the concomitant Sabian superstition of fabricating and adoring images made under supposed planetary influences, drove the virtuous Abraham into voluntary exile.

* Porphyrius de Antro Nympharum, p. 254.

The Indian sacred books, still leading us back to the parent-country of the world, pointedly confirm this statement also; for, Mr. Wilford, after informing us, by way of introduction, that Lucian describes pilgrims in his time resorting from India to Hieropolis, in Syria; and that *Hieropolis* appears to him to be the same city with the *Mahabhaga* of the Pooraun, that is to say, the station of the goddess DEVI, (or spirit that floated on the primordial waters, seated on the lotos,) with that epithet; adds the important intelligence, that, even at this day, the Hindoos occasionally visit, as he is assured, the two Jwalamuchis, or springs of Naphtha, in Cusha-dweepa within, the first of which, dedicated to the same goddess with the epithet Anayasa, is not far from the Tigris; and STRABO mentions a temple, on that very spot, inscribed to the goddess Anaïas: the second, or great Jwalamuchi, or spring with a *flaming mouth*, is near Baku, from which place some Hindoos have attempted to visit the sacred islands in the west.* Baku, the reader scarcely need be told, is situated on the Caspian Sea, to which it gives its name, and I mention its distant situation merely to shew how wide through the East the influence of the Magian superstition had spread 500 years before the Christian æra, and how numerous the disciples of the Zoroastrian school. Its doctrines seem at that period to have pervaded the whole of the Higher Asia, and to have been diffused through all the cities where the Persian power, then at its height, was acknowledged.

Without degrading this great reformer of the Persian religion, as Hyde has done, to the situation of a menial slave in the family of Ezekiel or Daniel, we may yet allow it to be extremely probable, and we are justified by chronology in supposing, that, in his youth, he might have familiarly conversed at Babylon, during the long residence of the Jewish captives at that city, with one or the other of those holy men; at least his writings and his precepts, so far as they

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iii. p. 9, oct. edit. reprinted at London.

are known to us, demonstrate an intimate acquaintance with the principal rites of the Jewish religion, and a diligent perusal of the ancient scriptures of the Hebrew nation. The same active curiosity, the same ardent thirst of knowledge, that led him to the woody recesses of the Brahmins, would naturally, had he no other motives, impel him rigidly to scrutinize into a system of religion so far exalted, in sublimity and purity, above the groveling systems of idolatrous worship that polluted the altars of surrounding nations. To this important acquisition of knowledge from its divine source, he doubtless added all the stores of traditional wisdom of the Noachidæ, that had descended down to him through the corrupted channel of the pagan philosophers of Asia. Thus distinguished by the sovereigns, and thus familiar with the literati, of Asia, equally known to the prophets of the true God, and the ministers of that false religion which had erected itself on its ruins, was it possible for the friend of Darius and the disciple of Daniel to be ignorant of that sublime passage, in the 7th chapter of Isaiah, which predicts in such express terms the miraculous birth of the Hebrew Messiah, BEHOLD, A VIRGIN SHALL CONCEIVE, AND BEAR A SON! or that in the 9th, which, in so decisive a manner, distinctly designates his exalted character, and denominates him, WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE! Could he possibly be ignorant of all that long chain of astonishing prophecies successively, and at that time recently, uttered by the same prophet, by Jeremiah, and other inspired men, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of the Jews by the Babylonian sovereign? or of the subversion of the Babylonian empire itself by the Medes and Persians? those prophecies in which CYRUS himself was twice mentioned by name 150 years before he was born. Could he be ignorant of the solemn decree of Cyrus for the return and reinstatement of the Jews in their ancient domains, religious rites, and civil privileges? or, on the retardation of that event by their determined enemies, of the confirmation of the decree of Cyrus, by his

patron Hystaspes, in the fourth year of his reign? These important national events, befalling a people of so peculiar a theological cast, could not have passed unnoticed under the very eye of one who united in his character at once the *courtier* and the *theologue*; and it is probable that he even befriended them in their second application for renewed permission to rebuild their temple. The conspicuous rank and station of Zeratusht in the Persian empire and on the great theatre of Asia, added to the celebrity of his learning, gave him an unbounded influence and authority over all the subordinate classes and colleges of the ancient Σοφοι, dispersed over the Eastern world, among whom the Brahmins must be enumerated; and an author of high repute, from Oriental sources, informs us, that he absolutely predicted to his disciples, that, at no very distant period, *a* SACRED PERSONAGE *should issue from the womb of an immaculate* VIRGIN, *and that his coming would be preceded by a brilliant* STAR, *whose light would guide them to the place of his nativity.**

Whatever truth there may be in this relation, which I would not insert from an author of less respectability than Abulfaragius, it is certain that the Jews themselves, either grounding their belief on the prophecy uttered by Balaam against the secret malignant purpose of his heart, and therefore justly supposed to be put into his mouth by the Omnipotent Power that watched over Israel, or induced by patriarchal traditions, firmly expected the prophetical allusion, not perhaps intended to be understood wholly in a metaphorical, nor absolutely in a literal, sense, to a brilliant appearance in the heavens, to be literally fulfilled, and that a star should, in fact, precede the coming of the Messiah. It is in vain that the Hebrew commentators fly to every subterfuge to avoid the imputation of indulging this notion, since their conduct, on a great national occasion, incontrovertibly establishes the fact. The impetuous zeal with which, in the 130th year of the Christian æra, they rushed to the standard of a mi-

* Vide Abulfaragii Historia Dynastiarum, p. 54, edit. Oxon, 1673.

litary impostor, whom their perverted imaginations had exalted into the true Messiah, demonstrates that they thus interpreted the prediction. At that time there flourished in Judæa a most celebrated Rabbi of the name of Akiba, a bitter enemy of the Christians, who, guided by ambition, or acting from the conviction of his mind, sanctioned the daring fraud. I allude to the famous impostor "named BAR-COCHEBAS, whose rapid success and sanguinary devastations through all Palestine and Syria filled Rome itself with astonishment. In this barbarian, so well calculated by his cruelty to be the Messiah, according to the perverted conceptions of the Jews, Akiba declared that prophecy of Balaam, *a star shall rise out of Jacob*, was accomplished. Hence the impostor took his title of BAR-COCHEBAS, or *son of the star*; and Akiba not only publicly anointed him KING OF THE JEWS, and placed an imperial diadem upon his head, but followed him to the field at the head of four-and-twenty thousand of his disciples, and acted in the capacity of master of his horse. To crush this dangerous insurrection, which happened in the reign of the Emperor Adrian, Julius Severus, prefect of Britain, one of the greatest commanders of the age, was recalled and dispatched from Rome, who retook Jerusalem, burnt that metropolis to the ground, and sowed the ruins with salt."* The prediction, therefore, of Zeratusht was in unison with the Jewish faith and traditions; and, through his means, the hope and promise of a Messiah, whose character and office were but darkly conceived, were diffused widely over all the Eastern world; confirming the traditions immemorially cherished among the pagan nations, and obscurely recorded in the venerable dogmas and writings of the oldest heathen philosophers.

In fact, I cannot consider, whatever may be genuine (and, doubtless, some portions *are* genuine, since all false coins have been pre-

* The above passage, inclosed in inverted commas, is in the Indian Antiquities, vol. ii. p. 552, where the reader may peruse an account of the miserable end of those fierce demagogues.

ceded by originals of sterling weight and value) in the mystic theology contained in the Zoroastrian or Chaldæan oracles, the Orphic mysterious verses, the writings of Hermes Trismegist, and the Sibylline books, with all that we read in the Pythagoric and Platonic remains concerning a great secondary cause, or principle, the celestial Δημιυργος and Ζευς Βασιλευς of the world, designated in the last of those books by the remarkable expression of *Magna Deum Soboles, Jovis Incrementum,* in any other light than as mutilations of those primitive traditions; for, from what other source could have originated the peculiarly strong and pointed expressions that so frequently occur in those ancient compositions concerning a δευτερος Θεος, or second god, a δευτερος Νȣς, or second mind, a θεῖος Λογος, or divine word, their Μιθρας Μεσιτης, or mediatorial Mithra, and Γεννητος Θεος, or generated god? The conceptions which gave birth to these expressions should doubtless be referred to the same origin with their notions concerning a Ψυχη Κοσμȣ, or soul of the world, and the symbolical theology which represented Brahma, or Osiris, *in loto arbore sedentem super aquam,* which are only corruptions of those primæval accounts that flourished in the patriarchal ages in respect to the functions and energic operations of the Holy Spirit. Hence, probably, the altar erected by the Athenians to *the unknown God*; hence that most remarkable but ill-understood prophecy of the venerable Confucius, SI FAM YEU XIM GIN, *In the west, the* HOLY ONE *shall appear,** Judæa being situated, in point of longitude, directly west from China. Hence, in many of the most sacred legends of pagan antiquity, a mode of phraseology seems to have prevailed, and sentiments have been adopted, apparently founded on some obscure idea of the incarnation of the Word, and exactly consonant to the assertion of the Scripture, that the *Word was made* FLESH. Nor will it, I hope, be considered as a conjecture utterly incredible and inadmissible if I presume to intimate that the procession of Christ, from the

* Consult Couplet Scient. Sin. lib. ii. p. 78, and Martinii Sin. Hist. lib. iv. p. 149.

great Αυτοθεος, by an eternal generation, appears to be the latent meaning of the ancient Greek allegory, that Minerva, used symbolically for the WISDOM OF GOD, sprang from the *head* of Jupiter.

Having already, in the Indian Antiquities, when discoursing on the Oriental Triads of Deity, produced in order the most striking passages in the above-mentioned oracles and sacred and philosophical treatises of pagan antiquity, that apparently had reference to the second Hypostasis and his divine emanation, there is no necessity for my ranging again over the same wide field. Since, however, the ancient books of the Sibyls, deposited in the Roman capitol, are not there particularly noticed by me, because less relevant to the leading point under discussion than the others, yet, since they are, in the present case, extremely important, as forming a considerable link in the great chain that unites together the Jewish and pagan traditions concerning the future Mediator, a more than cursory retrospect, upon those portions of them that are considered as most ancient and authentic, may be gratifying to the reader and serviceable to the cause which I am endeavouring to illustrate.

If the fourth eclogue of Virgil, mentioning, in terms so very remarkable, that a new age of justice and felicity was about to commence among men, a new order of things, and a new series of years, under the auspices of a personage of heavenly celestial extraction: —

Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo,
Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna,
Jam nova progenies cælo dimittitur alto: —

if that celebrated eclogue really be founded, as is affirmed, on the predictions of the Sibylline books, existing long before the birth of Christ, the sentiments on this subject of the ancient world are from them clearly manifest. Those venerable fragments probably contained the treasured wisdom of the first ages, carefully delivered down to posterity; and it should not be forgotten, that the genuine portions of them are allowed to be of Oriental origin, nor that the

most celebrated (the Cumæan) Sibyl, according to Justin Martyr, was the daughter of Berosus, the priest of Belus, who composed the Chaldaic history from the archives of the temple of his god. I am aware that the stigma of forgery has been affixed to the greater part of the collection of Greek verses, which at present go under the name of the Sibylline Oracles; yet, that all are not the fabrication of imposture, (the *pious fraud*, as is generally presumed, of some credulous and superstitious Christian in the second century,) is proved, among other circumstances, from their containing the very passage descriptive of the catastrophe at Babel, quoted by Josephus, in his Antiquities, eighteen centuries ago, though not in the exact words used by him; and long previous to that writer they were appealed to, and detached verses copied by Plato, Aristotle, and other Greek writers of repute. A still more just idea of the high antiquity of the Sibyls and their oracles may be founded on the circumstance that Virgil, who could not but be acquainted with the opinion of the learned of his time on this subject, in his sixth book, introduces Æneas consulting the hoary prophetess on his coming into Italy, which at once carries us back to the Trojan war, a period the remotest in human history. As those parts of the Sibylline oracles, that have reached us through the medium of the Roman bard, are of a date superior to the supposed æra of the fabrication of the collection at this day in existence, I shall principally confine my remarks to passages occurring in the Pollio.

Jam nova progenies cælo dimittitur alto.

In this line, though intended by a high-flown hyperbole to flatter a human being, if our author was faithful to his original, there is apparently a direct allusion to the incarnation of the Word, the only genuine AVATAR that descended from heaven. It is remarkable, that, wheresoever mention is made of this great Personage in the records of pagan antiquity, we always find some subsequent allusion to the *serpentine tempter*.

Occidet et serpens.

I am sensible that Servius and other commentators refer these and all similar expressions, occurring in this eclogue, to the commencement of the *magnus annus*, or Αποκαταστασις of the Stoic philosophers; and, doubtless, Virgil had that celebrated epoch in view when he thus complimented his hero; but the original prediction had a deeper allusion, and was the result of the primitive traditions on the subject. The following lines, however, cannot be said to have an *astronomical*, but a *moral*, allusion, nor could they be applicable either to Pollio or Augustus: —

> Te duce, si quà manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
> Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras: —

by the poet's afterwards mentioning so particularly *priscæ vestigia fraudis*.

> ———— Et altera quæ vehat Argo
> Delectos heroas. ——

We have a farther insight into the latent meaning of those original oracles, from which the Pollio is allowed to be copied; for, the former has as manifest an allusion to the original defection of man from pristine innocence and virtue through the fraud of the beguiling serpent, as the latter has to the perverted story of the Noachic deluge. It is scarcely necessary to point out the remarkable similarity which that well-known passage,

> —— Nec magnos metuent armenta leones,

bears to a verse in the chapter of Isaiah sacred to the same subject; for, they both have allusion to the peaceful reign of the good shepherd, the shepherd of Israel, the mighty Pan, to him who is so emphatically designated in a subsequent verse by the majestic title of

> Cara deum soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum.

Such are the solemn attestations borne to this unknown but illustrious personage in one of the noblest compositions of the Roman muse, generally allowed to consist of a selection of passages, from the Sibylline prophecy, most suitable to the artful purposes of the

poet. From the same source are also supposed to have been derived three other prophetic sayings, in very general circulation, about the period of our Saviour's advent, at Rome, though generally applied by their abject flatterers to their imperial tyrants: the first mentioned by Suetonius, *Regem populi Romani Naturam parturire*, or, That Nature herself was about to bring forth a Son that should be king over the Roman people.* The second in Tacitus, *Pluribus persuasio inerat*, says that historian, *antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur*, or, That a firm persuasion had seized the minds of very many of the citizens of Rome, that it was predicted, in the ancient sacerdotal books, that, about this time, the East should resume its ancient sceptre, and a Sovereign of the world issue from Judæa.† The third, in the above-cited Suetonius, *Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in Fatis, ut eo tempore Judæâ profecti rerum potirentur*, or, That over the whole East there had prevailed an ancient and permanent belief that it had been decreed by the Fates, that, about this period, Palestine should give a King to the Roman empire.‡ The above quotations, and that from authors in other respects not very friendly to the Jewish nation, are all so many direct proofs that either the Hebrew prophets had found their way among the pagan philosophers of Asia, or that very forcible impressions remained on their minds of the great original promise, that a royal Deliverer from the bondage of sin and death, mistaken by them for a great temporal prince, should, in God's appointed time, spring from the line of David, and spiritually reign upon the throne of Judah.

It was not only, however, by the testimony of *dead oracles* and traditional dogmas that the awful tidings of God, descending to sojourn with man, were corroborated; the LIVING ORACLES that

* Suetonius in Octavio, cap. 94, p. 114, edit. Bipont.

† Taciti Hist. lib. v. cap. 13.

‡ Suetonius in Vespasiano, cap. 4, p. 348, edit. Bipont.

existed in those days afforded also their attestation to the solemn fact. We are informed by Suidas, that, while Jesus was yet an infant, Augustus, sending to the great oracle of Apollo, at Delphi, to inquire who should be his successor, was answered by that oracle, "That a Hebrew child, Lord of the Gods, was come into the world, who had commanded him to depart to hell, and that no more answers were to be expected from Delphi."* Upon this, we are imformed, Augustus erected an altar in the capital with this inscription, PRIMOGENITO DEI, to the First-born of God.

Both Eusebius and Athanasius have recorded the following fact: that, when Joseph and Mary arrived in Egypt, they took up their abode in Hermopolis, a city of the Thebais, in which was a superb temple of Serapis. Conducted by Providence or induced by curiosity to visit this temple with the infant Saviour, what was their wonder and consternation, on their very entrance, to find not only the great idol itself, but all the *dii minores* of the temple, fall prostrate before them. The priests fled away with horror, and the whole city was in the utmost alarm.† The spurious Gospel of the Evangelium Infantiæ also relates this story, which is not, on that account, the less likely to be true, since it is probable the spurious Gospels may contain many relations of facts traditionally remembered, however dishonoured by being mingled with the grossest forgeries and puerilities. It is not probable that Eusebius or Athanasius derived their information from this source. In this relation we have a remarkable completion of that prophecy in Isaiah, *The Lord shall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence.* Isaiah xix. 1.

As the pagan oracles had borne such decisive testimony to the future appearance, and to the actual descent and existence, of the

* Suidas in voce Delphi.

† Vide Eusebii Demonstrat. Evang. lib. vi. cap. 20, Athanas. de Incarnat. Verbi. vol. i. p. 89, et Evang. Infant. apud Cod. Apocryph. vol. i. p. 176.

Messiah, so did they not wholly remain silent at the awful period of his last sufferings and his crucifixion; for, we are informed, by no less a person in Pagan antiquity than Plutarch, from whom it is copied by Eusebius, that, in the reign of Tiberius, about the period of the crucifixion, certain persons, embarking from Asia for Italy, towards the evening, sailed by the Echinades, (islands in the Ægean Sea,) whence an unknown voice called aloud on one Thamus, an Egyptian mariner, and commanded him, when he came to the Palades, to declare, that *the great Pan was dead.* On the arrival of the ship at that island, the mariner did not neglect the command of the oracle; but, a dead calm favouring the delivery of the message, he, with a loud voice, exclaimed, Ὁ μεγας Παν τεθνηκε, *the great Pan is dead.* Immediately an innumerable multitude of voices was heard echoing those words, accompanied with bitter howling and lamentations of the *dæmons* who uttered them, for the subversion of that kingdom which Satan had set up, and the annihilation of his power, by the death of Christ.*

Having now, I flatter myself, in the course of this investigation, by a train of very impressive evidence, deduced from various and distant quarters, established, as far as the nature of that evidence would allow, three important points; first, the existence of certain primæval traditions relative to a future MEDIATOR, widely dispersed over all the Gentile world; secondly, that, if there be truth in history, the Persian Zeratusht, the disciple of Daniel, 520 years before the Christian æra, visited the Brachmanes, in their woody recesses, fraught with all the treasures of the Jewish learning, and acquainted with the express predictions, on the same subject, of their most venerated prophets; and, thirdly, that the Pagan oracles themselves, both dead and living, were in perfect unison with those predictions;

* Plutarch de Defectu Oraculorum, p. 39.

I might be justified in here closing the present chapter, and leaving it to the reader's candid decision how far I have been warranted by facts in concluding, that, from these various sources, combined with certain historical fragments concerning the feats of some ancient hero of their nation, equally celebrated for bravery and piety, the Brahmins formed the motley character and history of Creeshna; and, in fact, on that ground, founded the first idea of a heavenly *Avatar*. This is the broad and, indeed, the only safe and solid basis for the argument respecting Creeshna's life and miracles to rest upon; for, however happy and ingenious, as it certainly is, may be the conjecture of Sir William Jones, concerning the interpolation of the Brahmin records from the Apocryphal Gospels, it still affords but a partial explanation of the difficulty. Many of the mythological sculptures of Hindostan, that relate to the events in the history of this Avatar, more immediately interesting to the Christian world, being of an age undoubtedly anterior to the Christian æra, while those sculptures remain unanswerable testimonies of the facts recorded, the assertion, unaided by these collateral proofs, rather strengthens than obviates the objection of the sceptic. Thus the sculptured figures, copied by Sonnerat from one of their oldest pagodas, and engraved in this volume, the one of which represents Creeshna dancing on the *crushed head* of the serpent, and the other the same personage entangled in its enormous folds, to mark the arduousness of the contest, while the enraged reptile is seen *biting his foot*, together with the history of the fact annexed, could never derive their origin from any information contained in the *spurious Gospels*, but exhibit an illustrious proof of the truth of the Christian religion from a more ancient and authentic source. For the same reason, I do not strenuously insist upon it, although I think the conjecture extremely probable, and approaching nearly upon certainty, that the murder of the infant-children at Mathura, by the tyrant Cansa, and the

rapid conveyance of Creeshna by his father over the Jumma, under cover of the night, to baffle the fury of the tyrant, were direct imitations of the massacre of the innocents by Herod, and the flight of Joseph into Egypt with the infant Jesus. Allusions to this fact are frequent on the sculptured walls of their temples, and in the pictures that emblazon their mythology; of what antiquity it is impossible precisely to say; but, if that prominent and ferocious figure in the Elephanta cavern, bearing a drawn sword and surrounded with slaughtered infants, be, in reality, as some Indian antiquaries have thought, allusive to this Avatar, (though it is far more probable to be a representation of the Evil Principle,) the matter is decided on the opposite scale. That summary mode of extirpating a dreaded enemy was, we have seen in the instance of Moses and his Hebrew brethren, anciently practised in the East: and, should the passage in question not eventually prove to be an interpolation, *one* solid advantage, at least, will result from this inquiry, — that what has appeared, even to some Christians, most incredible in the affair, the sanguinary mandate itself of the enraged Herod, is explained at once, to the satisfaction of the reader, and the honour of the veracity of the Evangelist who records the shocking fact. It must, however, be allowed to be a wonderful coincidence, as doubtless will appear many others which will occur in the life of Creeshna, the vestiges of which I can only dubiously trace to any part of Sacred Writ. Although, therefore, I cannot but consider my own hypothesis as the more satisfactory of the two proposed, because it ascends to a remoter source, yet, that mode of solving the difficulty having been referred to, I do not think myself at liberty to pass over the question in a transient manner; and, having procured the spurious Gospels, in various languages, and of various editions, I have made the desired inquiry, of which the following strictures are the result.

The star that was to *arise out of Jacob* and illumine Palestine, (and not only Palestine, but the whole earth,) at length made its appearance in the eastern horizon. The Persian Magi, addicted to the Sabian superstition, and not unmindful of the prediction of their great master Zeratusht, (a prediction which, as I enlarge my inquiry, I find more widely diffused than I at first supposed through Asia,*) from the heights of the mountainous regions where they resided, and watched the motions of the heavenly bodies, had long been anxiously solicitous for the manifestation of the brilliant prodigy. The wonderful condescension of Divine Providence, in announcing this stupendous event to the Gentile world, by a sign the most intelligible to their comprehension, and after a mode the most consonant to the habits and prejudices of a race involved in the depth of astronomical superstition, at once excites admiration and impresses gratitude on the reflecting mind. The physical phænomenon ordained to precede that appearance, *the morning-star to the Sun of Righteousness*, had already blazed forth, during the space of nearly two years, to the astonished disciples of Zoroaster, who, impatient to behold *the Desire of all Nations*, lost not a moment in obeying its

* It occurs at the very opening of a production which I shall presently have occasion to mention in great detail, — the *Evangelium Infantiæ*, as I find it translated from the Arabic, through the medium of which language it probably reached India, by Henry Sike, "*Ecce Magi venerunt ex Oriente Hierosolymas*, QUEMADMODUM PRÆDIXERAT ZORADASCHT." Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti, cura Fabricii vol. i. p. 173, edit. Hamburg. 1703.—I think it important to mention this circumstance, in addition to what was cited in a former page from Abulfaragius; because, the Arabian author probably inserted it as one of the traditional dogmas of Zeratusht, preserved in his own school; for, there were Arabian as well as Persian Magi. He certainly found nothing of it in the Apocryphal Gospel, upon the same subject, in Greek, and ascribed to St. Thomas; for, that precedes the Arabic one, in this volume, with the Latin version of Cotelerius. There are two very forcible reasons for supposing them both to have been fabricated in the earliest ages of Christianity; for, in the first place, the Greek version is mentioned in the works of Irenæus and Origen, both of whom lived in the second century; and, secondly, we find many passages of the latter inserted almost *verbatim* in the text of the Koran of Mohammed, who was born in the sixth century. In fact, the *Evangelium Infantiæ* seems to have been the principal, though corrupted, medium by which that impostor arrived at any knowledge of Christianity.

summons and in submitting themselves to its guidance. We shall not stop here, to examine the philosophical perplexities that appear to envelope this subject, of the star that appeared to the Magi: it has already been often and ably investigated, and the magnified difficulties in great part removed, by the efforts of learned and pious writers. But it should ever be remembered, that this was a *miraculous* display of omnipotent power, for the most glorious of purposes, and therefore cannot properly be brought before the tribunal of human reason; a display worthy of the immortal object to which it pointed, and one the truth of which is equally attested by sacred and profane writers of antiquity. Whether, therefore, the phænomenon in question was, as I am inclined to think, the light of an *occult* star blazing suddenly forth in the heavens, (resembling that of superior effulgence which appeared in Cassiopea in, 1572, and which continued visible about sixteen months in our hemisphere,) and afterwards, to human eye, apparently extinguished; a doctrine in perfect unison with the astronomy of the present day;* or whether, as seems to be determined by the generality of commentators, only a fiery meteor of an appearance unusually luminous; its uncommon lustre, and its punctual appearance at the time predicted, confirmed the ancient traditions, and animated the illustrious Σοφοι immediately to undertake a journey of many hundred leagues, over unknown mountains, rivers, and deserts, to adore the bright original of which that refulgent orb was the emblem and index. I am aware, that the generality of Christian writers, on this subject of the journey of the Magi to Bethlehem, make it to have taken place from Arabia. To this opinion they have been principally induced by the proximity of that region of Asia to Palestine, and

* The ancients themselves were not wholly inattentive to the changes that took place among the fixed stars. It was the appearance of a *new star* in the heavens, about 120 years before the incarnation, that induced Hipparchus to form the first catalogue of them, in order that posterity might notice any future changes that took place among them.

by a laudable desire to demonstrate the completion, on this occasion, of that prediction in the seventy-second Psalm, that *the kings of Sheba and Saba shall offer gifts to the new-born Messiah.* It is not, however, clear to me, that, at that period, the Arabians cultivated astronomy, and watched the nocturnal heavens, with the zeal of the more eastern astronomers; at least, we have no proofs of the fact from history at all approaching to those which record the unwearied diligence of the Persian and Indian Magi. Allowing, therefore, those writers all the credit so justly due to their zeal and their erudition, since it is more conformable to the general hypothesis adopted in this volume, I am rather inclined to coincide in opinion with the learned Hyde, who determines that journey to have commenced from Persia, the original seat of the Magian school, and residence of the Archimagus; and the Scripture itself certainly justifies the conjecture, since, on their arrival in Judæa, as is supposed on the twelfth day after the birth of our Saviour, and on their being interrogated by Herod concerning the time of the first appearance in the East of the star that guided them thither, they returned him such an answer as induced the enraged king to order the immediate massacre of *all the children in Bethlehem, and the coasts thereof, from* TWO YEARS *old and under*; a period in less than which their journey could scarcely have been accomplished. Although the number of the Magi has been fixed, by ancient traditions, to *three*, yet, as no particular number is specified in Scripture, and as their direct route to Judæa lay through Arabia, it is not impossible but that, on making known their errand, they might have been also joined by some of the Σοφοι of that country also, bearing the tributary frankincense and myrrh in which Arabia so much abounded, in addition to that gold which was the peculiar produce of the wealthy regions lying still nearer the rising sun. The station of the star, used as the *secondary* instrument by Divine Providence to manifest to the Gentile world the birth of

Christ, though splendidly conspicuous as far as the northern limits of Persia, was probably in that portion of the heavens which lies directly over Judæa. The predominant, and perhaps peculiar, light emaning from that star was their unerring guide to Bethlehem, at a period when travellers by *land* as well as by *sea* were accustomed to guide themselves by the light of particular stars: for, what other guides could they have to direct them by night, when only journeys could be performed in that scorching region, over the vast sandy and tractless deserts of Asia. If it should be objected that the remote light of no star in the firmament, however brilliant and powerful, could point out to the Magi the particular habitation of the holy family, the hypothesis here adopted by no means excludes the more immediate exertion of divine power, in causing an inflamed meteor, or a radius of glory, to illuminate the spot; and this in all probability was the case. It is impossible for the human mind to conceive, and, though the most renowned masters in science have attempted the sketch, for the powers of human genius accurately to paint, the august and affecting scene which, in mockery of all the pageantry of human magnificence, now took place in the stable of the humble inn at Bethlehem; — the astonished parents, the prostrate Magi, the divine child, receiving, with a smile of ineffable benignity, the proffered treasures of the East: — Nature never witnessed such an awful scene but once; and liberated man, for whose emancipation these amazing scenes were transacted, ought to cherish the remembrance with pious rapture while thought and existence remain.

The scriptural account of the sidereal herald that announced to the Oriental world the advent of the Saviour of the World, and of the subsequent journey and adoration of the Magi, wants not the collateral testimony of an eminent philosopher of those times; and, had the science of astronomy been then more generally cultivated, many others would undoubtedly have still remained.

Chalcidius, a writer who flourished not long after Christ, in a commentary upon the Timæus of Plato, discoursing upon portentous appearances of this kind in the heavens, in different ages, particularly speaks of this wonderful star, which, he observes, presaged neither diseases nor mortality,* but the descent of a God among men: — *Stellæ, quam a Chaldæis observatam fuisse testantur, qui Deum nuper natum muneribus venerati sunt*:† — a star, which is attested to have been observed by Chaldæan astronomers, who immediately hastened to adore and present with gifts the new-born Deity.

It would be an unmanly line of conduct, and argue a disingenuousness totally unworthy the exalted subject we are engaged in discussing, to conceal from the reader that the two first chapters of St. Matthew, relating these solemn facts, and tracing back the genealogy of Christ, have themselves, by certain writers not in other respects sceptical, been attacked as *spurious*. The circumstance has arisen principally from some magnified difficulties in the genealogical history in the first chapter, and from the astonishing nature of the facts recorded in the second, — the journey and adoration of the Magi, and the subsequent massacre of the infants by Herod. These writers found the argument for their spuriousness on a very absurd and chimerical basis. They *assume*, (and it is mere *assumption*, without any kind of proof,) that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel in the Hebrew or Syriac language only, and that the author of the Greek version added the initial chapters in question. It is an opinion, however, sanctioned by very high authority in antiquity, that the apostle was the author of both Gospels, and was induced to write them in two different dialects for the more extensive propagation of the sacred truths contained in them: the

* *Moresque*, in the original, should, doubtless, be *mortesque*, and so I have ventured to render it.

† Chalcidius in Timæum Platonis, p. 19.

first, written, a very short time after our Lord's ascension, for the benefit of the Jewish converts; the latter, somewhat later, for the instruction of the Gentile proselytes. Those holy and considerate persons who admitted the Greek Gospel, which has descended down to us among the canonical books, had, in all probability, seen the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew also, and could easily have detected the forgery, had it really been one; and no doubt can be entertained but that all the sacred books thus admitted underwent a most rigid scrutiny, and that their authenticity was first incontrovertibly established.

Although I conceived it would be disingenuous wholly to omit noticing a circumstance so well known to the learned as the spuriousness *attempted* to be fixed on these chapters, yet this is not the place for entering into any extended discussions on the subject. Indeed, it is rendered in a great degree unnecessary, as well by the futility of the objections themselves as the laborious investigation of preceding writers, who may be consulted.* What is here offered is of a general nature, and retrospective on corresponding events in the annals of India; I shall, therefore, briefly observe, that, whatsoever difficulties there may be (as some there certainly are, though none insuperable) in the former of these chapters, that treats concerning the genealogy of our Saviour, the strong connecting chain of evidence produced above, both collateral and positive, relative to the continued expectations of the whole Gentile world, and particularly of the Eastern Σοφοι, with whom all the traditional wisdom and venerable predictions of their ancestors for ages had been treasured, renders the fact recorded in the second, of the journey and adoration of the Magi, extreme-

* See two pamphlets on this subject; the one entitled, "Free Thoughts upon a Free Inquiry into the Authenticity of the First and Second Chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel;" the second, "The Authenticity of the First and Second Chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel vindicated;" and that "Free Inquiry" itself; all published about the year 1771.

ly probable, if not indisputable. The savage custom, too, of Eastern despots, in destroying a whole generation to make themselves sure of a single victim, demonstrated also above to have been sometimes practised in Asia, will remove much of the improbability resulting from the horror of the deed; especially when it is considered, that Herod himself was at once the most profligate and sanguinary of tyrants, and, not long before, had put three of his own children to death, on the bare accusation of their having aspired to his crown, which drew from Augustus that well-known sarcasm, "*that he would choose rather to be Herod's hog than his son*;" a reproach, which might also have an aspect towards the massacre of the infant-children at Bethlehem, probably not unreported by his enemies at the court of Rome. For my own part, I am inclined to think, that the relation of these circumstances, with all the particulars by which they are accompanied in St. Matthew, has a far greater tendency to establish than to invalidate the genuineness of the chapters in question, as well as the reality of the events recorded; for, would, indeed, any person have had the audacity, so soon after those events as the Gospel of St. Matthew (I mean the Greek Gospel, nearly as old as the original in Hebrew, and which, under the apostolical sanction, has descended, unmutilated, down to our own times) is known to have been promulged, to insert a relation which, if not founded on real facts, could so easily have been confuted? — Or, waving for a moment all debate on the authenticity of these chapters, would the apostle himself, in the face of the whole Jewish nation, in the most decided manner, have affirmed, that these amazing transactions took place, had they not been actually performed? — Were there no Jews at that time living, whose immediate ancestors resided in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, while these momentous scenes were acting, and who certainly wanted no incentive to expose any false statement of the early Christians with respect to the Messiah?

But, farther, I am of opinion, that an indubitable testimony, in favour of their authenticity, may be drawn from a quarter inveterately hostile to Christianity. Celsus, the most learned and able of its assailants, wrote his invective so early as the middle of the second century; and would Celsus, with all the sources of genuine information in his power, have alluded to these solemn facts, as related in this Evangelist, which he evidenly does, if cited correctly by Origen,* with a view to subvert the doctrine of Christ's divinity founded upon it, unless it formed at that time a part, and that an *undisputed* part, of the said Gospel? — It was extremely important to the purpose of the laboured argument of this celebrated Epicurean philosopher, that, in his attack upon Christianity, he should accurately have distinguished between the *genuine* and the *imputed* doctrines of its first professors. Any supposition to the contrary would be at once a degradation of his understanding and a subversion of his hypothesis. But, in truth, there scarcely existed a possibility of error on subjects so public and so notorious. That publicity is in the strongest manner intimated throughout the whole narration of St. Matthew. No part of this awful drama is represented as having been acted in the privacy of solitude, or in the shade of obscurity: every particular of the wonderful story is related with a dignified simplicity that bids defiance to the severest scrutiny. —— On the arrival of the Magi at Jerusalem, they speak of the star, and of the new-born King of the Jews, as things of public notoriety, as things known and seen by all: — *Where is he that is born King of the Jews; for, we have seen his star?* — And the immediate convoking of the Sanhedrim by Herod, as well as his subsequent order to destroy the children, must have greatly added to that notoriety. Again, Celsus, or, at least, the Jew in Celsus, reproaches the Christians with the flight of their infant

* Vide Origen contra Celsum, lib.i. p.45, edit. 1658

God into Egypt, as if a God were not able to protect himself from the cruel perfidy of man;* which argument, however absurd and futile, yet, as referring to what is related in the second chapter of Matthew, affords another proof that it then stood where it now does. There are also other allusions in Celsus to this chapter, which demonstrate that it must then have been in existence; and, as that learned writer was well informed in all matters relating to Christianity, was not regarded in the light of an interpolation, but as the genuine writing of the Evangelist, and as containing a fundamental part of the Christian code. But the most important and satisfactory result of the whole inquiry is, that those events are only scoffed at and ridiculed by Celsus and his sceptical associates; they are not denied, nor are they, any more than the miracles of Christ, attempted to be disproved. The silence, therefore, of one of the most learned and determined adversaries of Christianity, on a point so momentous as the preceding, may justly be deemed no unimportant additional testimony to the truth of the awful facts under consideration.

Although I should be sorry to degrade these pages by introducing into them any of the legends of the Romish church, yet so much has been said by the Portuguese writers concerning the ancient Christians of St. Thomas, *the Apostle of the Indies*, as he is sometimes denominated by them, that it would be inexcusable, on a subject like the present, wholly to omit mentioning what they assert relative to those people and that apostle. From the traditions of the church, and the testimony of the fathers, sufficient evidence may be collected to convince us, that, on the distribution made by the apostles of the several regions of the Gentile world, in which they were respectively to exercise their ministry, the vast district of Parthia and the more eastern empires of Asia were allotted to St. Thomas; and that

* Origen contra Celsum, lib. i. p. 51.

apostle, who, by the condescension of his crucified Master, had such decided and public proof permitted him of that resurrection which is the basis of the Christian hope of immortality, was, doubtless, proportionably animated by it to tempt every danger of a fiery climate and barbarous nations, and propagate its doctrines to the farthest bounds of the habitable globe. The Medes, the Persians, the Carmanians, and the inhabitants of Hyrcania and of Bactria, whose capital was Balkh, the ancient residence of the Magi, of which provinces, at that time, the Parthian empire consisted, successively shared the benefit of his instructions. The Eastern traditions add, that, in this quarter of Asia, he met, far advanced in the vale of years, with those venerable Magi who had visited the Saviour of the World in Bethlehem; that he admitted them, by baptism, into the pale of the Christian church; and experienced from them essential services during his abode in that part of Asia.* As there is no gross improbability in the story, and as the idea is withal highly gratifying to the mind of the Christian, it ought not to be hastily rejected, though recorded by the unknown author of the Imperfect Commentary upon St. Matthew, a work of considerable antiquity. From Parthia, our apostle is said to have visited India, already, by the doctrine of its *Avatars*, prepared to receive with benignity the Herald of the *true* Messiah, though not to renounce its absurd superstitions in honour of Creeshna, the pretended Saviour. This ever has been, and probably ever will continue to be, the unfortunate case; for, since they allow that all religions come from God, and that all modes of adoring him, when springing from an upright heart, are acceptable to him; or, to use their own remarkable language on this point, since they affirm that the Supreme Being " is sometimes employed, with the attendant at the mosque, in counting the sacred beads; and some-

* Opus Imperfectum in Matth. homil. ii. written about A. D. 560.

times in the temple, *at the adoration of idols*; the intimate of the Mussulman, and the friend of the Hindoo; the companion of the Christian, and the confidant of the Jew;"* since they are firmly of opinion "that the Deity *has appeared* innumerable times, and by innumerable Avatars, in many parts, not only of this world, but of all worlds, for the salvation of his creatures; and that both Christians and Hindoos adore the *same God*, under *different forms*;"† since they indulge, I say, such latidunarian ideas in theological concerns; it was equally impossible for St. Thomas, as it has been for any modern missionary since, to persuade the great body of the people of Hindostan to renounce the errors of idolatry, and become sincere converts to the truth of uncorrupted Christianity. A considerable number of Hindoos, however, (as may be gathered from all the accounts of this apostle's life given us by the ancients, and confirmed by the diligent inquiries of the moderns,) were absolutely converted to the Christian faith; and the Brahmins themselves, though determined not to give up their usurped authority over the minds of the people, and the vast emoluments resulting from the idolatrous rites celebrated in the pagodas, yet, at the same time, comparing the accounts of the Magi, and the doctrines preached by our apostle, with their own Scriptures, discovered that strong resemblance, between some parts of the character and history of the Christian and Hindoo Deliverer, as seemed completely to verify the ancient traditions of their nation, and induced them to interpolate their sacred books with extracts from the Gospels, of which, at that early period, the spurious abounded more than the genuine throughout the East. It should not be omitted, that the very Gospel of the Infancy was originally known in Asia under the title of the *Gospel of*

* See the Preliminary Discourse of the Brahmins who translated the Code of Gentoo Laws, p. 4, 4to edit. 1776.

† Sir William Jones, in Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 274.

St. Thomas, by which name it is often mentioned, and condemned by the fathers as a base forgery, unworthy of his name and character. The number of the spurious Gospels of which we have any knowledge, as they are enumerated by Fabricius, amounts to no less than THIRTY-NINE; of which, those that have descended down to our own time will be found in that writer's often-cited work, the Codex Apocryphus. It is happy for us that they *have* so descended, since we are by this means enabled to detect imposition, and vindicate the authority and dignity of the genuine productions of the Evangelists. There might also be another powerful motive with the Brahmins for making the asserted interpolations; for, though the zealous disciple of Christ, and his doctrines, so congenial with many of the sublimer dogmas of their own religious faith, might be welcomed on his first arrival, yet, the number of proselytes daily and prodigiously increasing, they might be alarmed lest the total downfal of their superstition, and the absolute loss of their enormous gains from the practice of it, should be the fatal consequence. We are justified in this conjecture by the accounts given in Maffæus's Indian History,* and in the ancient martyrologies of his death, which is said to have happened after the following manner:— This holy man, pursuing the successful career of his spiritual embassy, continued his progress probably by the route of the Indus, from the northern to the southern regions of India, where he gained still greater fame and more numerous disciples. At Cranganor, then said to have been the capital of a kingdom of the same name, but now a miserable town and fort on the Malabar coast, he instituted that order of Christians who boast his name; and, though, in succeeding ages, deeply infected with dangerous errors, principally of the Nestorian sect, have flourished, in a continued series, from the time of their great founder, and boast still to retain

* Maffæi Hist. Ind. lib. ii. p. 85.

the records of their institution, and an original grant of land to their patron, St. Thomas, from the reigning king of India, sufficient for the erection of a church, engraved on tablets of brass. These tablets, for some centuries, were lost; but, during the vice-royalty of Don Alfonsa Sousa, one of the early governors of the Portuguese India, were dug up. They have, or, at the beginning of the present century, had, for their spiritual head, an archbishop, resident at Cochin, on this coast, who is under the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Babylon. The apostle of the Indies, having established this Christian colony at Cranganor, and, if his biographers may be credited, having visited, and sown the seeds of the Gospel in, the great island of Taprobane, sailed eastward even to China itself, and laid the foundation in that empire of its triumph in future ages; a triumph, which would appear incredible, if not attested by such authentic writers as the Arabian Travellers in the ninth, and Marco Paulo in the thirteenth, century.* From China, our apostle returned to India, and settled at Meliapoor, upon the opposite shore of the peninsula, under the protection of a certain king, on the coast of Coromandel, named Sagamo, who had been converted by his miracles. The Brahmins, however, growing jealous of him, and dreading his superior influence over the mind of that prince, resolved to put him to death; and, pursuing him out of the city, to a tomb, at which he used occasionally to retire and perform his devotions, transfixed him with lances while fervently engaged in prayer.

From this fatal event, Meliapoor is said to have taken the appellative of the murdered saint, having been since generally known by the name of San Thome; and a considerable eminence near the city, whither he was pursued by the vindictive

* See a Dissertation, by M. Renaudot, on the Origin of the Christian Religion in China, added to his Ancient Accounts of India and China, by two Mohammedan Travellers, in the Ninth Century, p. 76.

Brahmins, and where his tomb and a magnificent church were afterwards erected by the Christians of his order, is called the Mount of St. Thomas. Their brethren of the Malabar coast were anciently accustomed to undertake toilsome and dangerous pilgrimages to this spot, though at the distance of 400 leagues, across the peninsula, to worship the sacred relics (his bones, a miraculous cross stained with his blood, and the lance that occasioned his death) which are asserted by the missionaries to have been found on this mountain, and deposited in the chapel of this the metropolitan church of India. Meliapoor is recorded to have been, in former times, the capital of the kingdom of Coromandel, and the great emporium of commerce on this coast. Whether this be true or not, it is certain that its name of San Thome is of very ancient date, having been known by this denomination when the two Mohammedan travellers visited India, nearly ten centuries ago. I am no advocate for monkish legends, though I think it necessary, on the present occasion, to insert the relations of Origen, Eusebius, and the early ecclesiastical historians. But let us hear the opinion of the respectable M. Renaudot concerning this matter: — "Although this tradition" (of St. Thomas's preaching and death at Meliapoor) "is not altogether *certain*, it nevertheless carries some air of authority with it; inasmuch as the name of SAN THOME, which is imposed on the city of Meliapoor, has, for many ages past, been known, not only among Europeans, but also among the Arabs, both Christian and Mohammedan; for, our two authors speak of Betuma, or Batuma, as of a place known upon the Indian shores; and this word signifies the same with Beit-Thomas, the *house* or *church* of St. Thomas, just as the Arabs and Syrians write and pronounce Bazbadi for Beitzabdi, Bagarmi for Beitgarme, and the like."* Such are the accounts, partly tradi-

* See Ancient Accounts of India and China, p. 82.

tional and partly historical, that have been handed down to us from ancient writers concerning the preaching, travels, and death, of the *Apostle of the Indies*; accounts, to which every one will give that proportion of credit which he may think due to the reporters; who are, some of the fathers, the ancient martyrologists, and the Portuguese historians, Osorius, Maffæus, and the author of the Portuguese Asia.

There is no occasion, however, to rest the argument in favour of the conversion of a large portion of the Indian nation, in the earliest periods of Christianity, solely on the mission of St. Thomas. The apostles and their disciples were zealously and successfully propagating its sublime and pure doctrines in every quarter of Asia. The capitals of Persia, Arabia, and Syria, with which countries India at that time kept up a vigorous commerce, were crowded with its votaries; and the Indian merchants, as well as the YOGEES, who were then in the practice of undertaking long pilgrimages to the remotest parts of Asia, in order to explore the sacred fountains and flaming springs of Naphtha dispersed through Asia, and the objects of veneration to their ancestors, could not fail, in their conversations and intercourse with foreigners, of becoming acquainted with the principles of a religion which, in many respects, was so similar to their own, or of bringing back with them the various Gospels, genuine and apocryphal, diffused in such numbers through the Higher Asia. At that time, a constant correspondence, maintained, for above three hundred years from the time of Alexander, with the Greeks, who had settled, in multitudes, under the Seleucidæ, in Persia, must have prevented the Indians from being entire strangers to the Greek language, in which, for the most part, those Gospels were written: or, if they were wholly so, there remained the Syriac, and, in particular, the Persian, (the ancient Persian, spoken about that time, of which we have before been told, by the greatest linguist that ever lived, that *six or seven words*

in ten were pure Sanscreet,) as the certain media of informing the Indians concerning the history of the birth, actions, and death, of our Saviour. There cannot be a more direct proof how generally and how early the religion of Christ was diffused throughout Persia, than that, upon its ruins, arose, in the third century, the impious and widely-extended heresy of Manes, which was compounded out of the ancient Zoroastrian or Magian superstition and certain perverted doctrines of Christianity; for, that impostor had the policy to propagate the notion of an immediate relation of the character of Christ to the mediatorial Mithras of the ancient Persians, declaring him to be the presiding genius over the visible world, and his throne to have been, from eternal ages, in the SUN; from which orb, his luminous shrine, he descended in person, to instruct and reform mankind, and to which, at the termination of his mission from the Good Principle, he returned; blasphemously giving out, at the same time, that he himself was the promised *Paraclete.* The Evangelium Infantiæ has been assigned to the fertile invention of this heresiarch; but, however vitiated his doctrines by its contents, that circumstance is impossible, since Manes did not appear on the theatre of Asia till the year 277, and Irenæus had already anathematized that production in the middle of the second century, with all the train of Gnostic errors which the Manichæans, in the next century, so zealously adopted.

Alexandria, too, it should be remembered, at that time the grand emporium of all the commerce carried on between the eastern and western world; Alexandria, partly reclaimed from paganism by the labours of St. Mark, recorded, by the church, to have suffered martyrdom there; was, on account of its celebrated library and noble college, instituted by the munificence of the Ptolemys, crowded with learned men from every quarter of the civilized globe; and Egypt, or the exterior *Cusha-Dweepa,* being not beyond the limits forbidden by their supreme le-

gislator to be passed, was then probably much more the resort of Hindóos than in later periods, when there existed no government sufficiently liberal to *tolerate*, and, at the same time, sufficiently powerful to *protect*, foreigners of different religious habits from those of the country. These, hearing of a miraculous Child, the Saviour of the World, who, in his infancy, had run the same risk of destruction with their favourite divinity CREESHNÁ; — to the truth of which then recent fact, Egypt itself, and the great city of Hermopolis, where the idols fell down, as Dagon of old before the ark, at his august presence, could bear ample testimony; — struck also with astonishment at the resemblance of his name, and at the miracles of the infant Jesus at *Matarea*, in the Thebais; a word so consonant to their *Mathura*, the scene of Creeshna's youthful exploits; miracles, recorded in those numerous apocryphal Gospels, which we may collect from the beginning of St. Luke's genuine Gospel, "*For as much as* MANY *have taken in hand to set forth*," &c. had, even at that time, begun to be so multiplied over the East by the imprudent zeal of the first Christians; and, finally, comparing their doctrines and characters, as well as calmly reflecting on the firmness of the dying martyr, who, before their eyes, sealed, with his blood, the truth of the doctrines which he had taught the Alexandrians; these Indian merchants, I say, must have received, and retained when returned to their own country, the most lively impressions of the new religion; which, probably, they might consider as an extension of their own system of faith. Various others, among the disciples of the apostles, ardent to propagate the faith of Jesus, by means of the Roman fleets, which then annually visited India by the route of Alexandria and the Arabian Gulph, might also be instrumental in planting that faith upon its shores; and that the Indians were not ignorant of what passed at Rome, and the western parts of their empire, is evident, from the two embassies dis-

patched, the one shortly after the other, by Porus to Augustus, in the nineteenth year before Christ, in order to solicit his friendship and an alliance with the Roman empire. What was most remarkable in the latter of these embassies, next to the extraordinary presents (intended, it should seem, rather to terrify than to conciliate the emperor) and the veteran herald Zarmanochagagos, or Ochagas, the Sarman, was the epistle, written, upon vellum, in the *Greek language*, and asserting his dominion over six hundred feudal princes of India;* which strongly confirms our former conjecture, that the Indians were well acquainted with the dialect of Greece. Pliny has also recorded a third embassy, sent, about the middle of the first century, to the Emperor Claudius, from the king of Taprobane, then the mart of a most flourishing trade, carried on with Alexandria on the one hand, and the two coasts of the Indian peninsula on the other.†

Thus, from numerous and distant sources of intelligence, traditional and historical, as well as from a multiplicity of collateral evidence, almost amounting to demonstration, have we been able to establish the truth of our original position, that the Indians, with all the other nations of the Gentile world, had a notion of, and expected, a Mediator.

I shall now, in addition to the parallel circumstances briefly stated in page 269, proceed to demonstrate the truth of the repeated assertions occurring above concerning the numerous imitations and interpolations from the Apocryphal Gospels, by exhibiting a variety of parallel facts and passages, in the Life of Creeshna, the spurious Gospels, and the Koran, so very striking in their general feature of resemblance, as incontestably to prove to every unprejudiced mind that the one is a copy of the other. It will also be evident, from the same circumstance, that

* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 789.

† Plinii Nat. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 22.

the Brahmins could have been no strangers to the *genuine* Gospels, and *must* have pilfered from them. I say *must*; because we know that the humble and illiterate disciples of Jesus were utterly unacquainted with the sciences and history of India, scarcely at this day at all known; and that the Evangelists, ignorant even of the Greek and Roman classics, could never have seen the Sanscreet books, or copied the Bhagavat of the sublime Vyasa. That the English reader may have an opportunity of judging for himself, concerning this similitude, and of comparing the passages as they may hereafter occur, I shall, for the most part, cite the parallel accounts in Creeshna's romantic story, only altering, here and there, the orthography, from Baldæus; an author, who obtained his information from the Brahmins themselves, and those sacred books, whose dialect he understood, and whom, from the opportunities afforded me of comparing the relations, I can pronounce to be, in general, correct and authentic. The author of the Bhagavat does not stoop to record every minute circumstance of his hero's life: but the far greater part of what is recorded in Baldæus will be found in the following pages; for, it is a saying of great notoriety among the Brahmins, and the saying itself proves their intimate acquaintance with our sacred volumes, that, "if," to use the words of Baldæus, "the whole sea was filled with ink, the earth made of paper, and all the inhabitants of the terrestrial globe were only employed in writing, they would not be sufficient to give an exact account of all the miracles wrought by Kisna (Creeshna) during the space of 100 years, in the third period of the world, called the Duapaar-Yug."*

Creeshna, in the *male* line, was of royal descent, being of the Yadava line, the oldest and noblest of India, and nephew, by his *mother's* side, to the reigning sovereign; but, though roy-

* Baldæus apud Harris, vol. iii. p. 888.

ally descended, he was actually born in a state the most abject and humiliating; and, though not in a stable, yet in a dungeon. The birth of Christ, the King of Israel, took place under circumstances of extreme indigence; and the place of his nativity, according to the united voice of the ancients and of Oriental travellers, was a cave, artificially hollowed out of a rock, that formed the stable of the caravansera, to which his supposed progenitors had repaired, in the lowly village of Bethlehem. When the period of Creeshna's birth arrived, the whole room was at once splendidly illuminated, and the countenance of his father and mother emitted rays of glory. Thus, according to the Arabic edition of the Evangelium Infantiæ; and to which I shall principally refer, because I am of opinion *that* was the medium by which the Brahmins obtained the knowledge of these pretended miraculous circumstances that took place at Bethlehem; according to that Gospel, as translated by Henry Sike, *Spelunca repleta erat luminibus, lucernarum et candelarum fulgorem excedentibus, et solari luce majoribus.** Soon after Creeshna's mother was delivered of him, and while she was weeping over him and lamenting his unhappy destiny, the compassionate infant assumed the power of speech, and soothed and comforted his afflicted parent. The account of this matter is given in Baldæus, as cited below; for, the subsequent history of Creeshna is silent in respect to the consolation given to his mother, though it confers on him the gift of speech, as does the above edition of the Evangelium Infantiæ on Jesus, as soon as born. I must again declare my perfect acquiescence in the general accuracy of Baldæus; but the history of Creeshna is variously related, as may easily be conceived, in different quarters of the vast region of India. "The time of her gestation being expired on the day Aethen of the month Souwanne, this unfortunate princess,

* Evangelium Infantiæ: Arabice et Latine.

Creeshna's mother, being overwhelmed with grief, brought forth a son, about midnight, without the least pain, whose face was as bright as the full moon; but, as she had occasion to rejoice at the birth of so fine a child, his fate put her into incredible affliction. But Veeshnu, whose divine virtue was infused into this child, comforted his mother, telling her, that he would find means to escape the hands of his uncle, and deliver her out of her prison. Then, speaking to his father, Carry me, says he, to Gokul, on the other side of the river Jumna, to the Brahmin Nanda, whose wife having been lately brought to bed of a daughter, exchange *me* for *her*, and leave the rest to my disposal."* I shall add, from the same author, the remainder of this wonderful relation, which is more particular than he will find it in the subsequent history. It is, however, the *discourse* holden by the new-born infant with his father, to which, on account of what will follow, I wish more directly to point the reader's attention. "Yasodha answered, How is it possible to remove thee out of a chamber so closely guarded and kept, that not the least thing may pass in or out? — Kisna (this was the child's name) replied, The doors shall be opened to thee, and the guards so overcome with sleep that nothing shall stop thy free passage. He had no sooner spoken these words than the seven doors opened themselves, so that Yasodha took the child and carried him off without the least hindrance: but, coming to the river Jumna, directly opposite to Gokul, Kisna's father, perceiving the current to be very strong, it being in the midst of the rainy season, and not knowing which way to pass it, Kisna commanded the water to give way on both sides to his father, who accordingly passed, dry-footed, across the river, being all the way guarded by a serpent that held her head over the child, to serve it instead of an umbrella. The Banians call

* Baldæus apud Harris, vol. iii. p. 869.

this serpent Seshanaga.* Coming to the Brahmin's house, the door opened of itself; and, finding the Brahmin and his wife asleep, he exchanged *his son* for *their daughter*, which he carried along with him to the castle. In short, the water afforded him once more a free passage; and, finding the doors of the castle open, and the guards asleep, he locked them after him, and delivered the girl to his wife."

In the Koran of Mohammed, where that impostor is speaking of the birth of Christ, whom he always mentions respectfully, as a sublime prophet, though he denies his divinity, he puts these words into the mouth of Zachariah, when predicting the future greatness of the Messiah: — "While he is yet in the cradle, and in swaddling-clothes, he shall have the use of speech."† As the impostor could find nothing of this kind in St. Matthew, he undoubtedly derived his information from the spurious Gospel above-mentioned, which, at that time, was extant in Greek and Arabic, and a copy of which, in both those languages, (very different productions,) now lies before me. Mr. Sale, the learned editor of the Koran, in fact, makes the following observation on this very passage. "The reported sayings of the infant Jesus seem all to be taken from some fabulous traditions of the eastern Christians, one of which is preserved to us in the spurious Gospel of the *Infancy of Christ*, where we read that Jesus *spake*, while yet in the cradle, and said to his mother, *Verily I am* JESUS, *the Son of God, the Word which thou hast brought forth, as the Angel Gabriel did declare unto thee; and*

* This is the same serpent which, on the sixth plate of the first volume of the Indian History, is represented as hanging over, and guarding with its thousand heads, the slumbering Veeshnu, or, in other words, Creeshna: but I must observe, that the ancient sculpture from which the engraving is taken has not the least reference to this event; for, it is an astronomical allusion to Veeshnu (the SUN) slumbering during the solstitial period.

† Sale's Koran, vol. ii. p. 63, 8vo edit. 1765.

my Father hath sent me to save the world."* Some of these ridiculous legends even go so far as to make the infant Jesus speak in the womb, and upbraid Joseph with his suspicions of the chastity of his wife. How widely different is all this from the temperate and dignified narration of the true Gospel! that Gospel, which is almost totally silent in regard to the *infancy of Christ*, and only details those sublime exertions of his supernatural power which were necessary to demonstrate his divinity to mankind, and hold up to posterity the example of those benevolent virtues which it is the principal object of Christianity to inculcate!

In another note of Sale's, on the same book, we are informed, from a similar source, that the prophet Zacharias, who is said, in the Koran, to have had the charge of Mary, during the infancy of her pregnancy with the immaculate Child, that the holy man, at that time officiating-priest at the altar, suffered nobody but himself to go into her chamber or supply her with food, and that he always locked *seven doors* upon her. Notwithstanding this precaution, he constantly found a plentiful table spread before her, of *summer-fruits in winter and winter-fruits in summer*.† But it is not on account of the fruits, thus miraculously brought the Virgin, that I cite this passage, but because we have already seen, what the subsequent history will confirm, that the chamber, in which the mother of Creeshna was confined, was only to be approached through *seven strong doors of iron*.

Much in the same romantic style with the legends before-cited is the following traditional fable of Christ, when in his childhood, which is related in the Evangelium Infantiæ, and is several times gravely referred to in the Koran, as an indubitable testimony of the prophetic character of Jesus; for, no high-

* Evangelium Infantiæ, p. 5. † Sale's Koran, vol. ii, in the notes, p. 61.

er an one does the arch-impostor allow the Christian Messiah. When Jesus was seven years old, being accidentally at play with several children about his own age, they took it into their heads to form various figures of birds and beasts of clay, for their diversion; and, while each confidently extolled above the others his own production, Jesus told them, that he would far surpass them all; for, he would make the quadrupeds fabricated by himself walk and leap, which, accordingly, at his command, they did. He made, also, other figures of birds, into which he breathed, and they began to fly about, or came to him, as he ordered them, and received from his hand meat and drink for their sustenance. The astonished children, relating this fact to their parents, were forbidden to hold any more communion with Jesus, who was henceforth regarded as an impious sorcerer.* This is written exactly in the Hindoo spirit of fabling; and, of the same class, many surprising tales will occur in the subsequent history of the youthful Creeshna. There is, however, one prodigy of this kind, which is related in Baldæus and Roger, but is not detailed in the Bhagavat; and which, therefore, I shall insert in this place, as the reader might justly regret my omitting any of the pranks of this sportive little deity, whose imaginary feats so well display the fertile imagination of the Hindoos, and the repetition of which can never do harm or give offence, except when audaciously exalted into a competition or parallel with the *real* and stupendous miracles of the Redeemer of the World. "Not long after, Creeshna, coming home one day, found his mother busy in putting some pearls on a string. He asked her from what tree she had gathered them; but, she answering that she never knew pearls to grow on trees, but only in oister-shells, Creeshna took one of the biggest, which he had no sooner put into the ground but they saw a pearl-tree sprout

* Evangelium Infantiæ, edit. Fabricii, p. 111.

forth full of the most exquisite pearls. The mother standing amazed, and ready to worship him, he caused the tree to vanish immediately."* Possibly, this legend may be nothing more than a mutilation of the narrative concerning the blasted fig-tree. To this story, also, some kind of parallel may be found in the Evangelium Infantiæ; for, the infant Jesus, on his being at play with other Hebrew children, after a violent rain, amused himself with checking the current of the waters with the boughs of a tree. One of his companions, seeing this, ill-naturedly removed those boughs; upon which, Jesus sternly reprimanded him in these terms: — *Ecce jam tu quoque tanquam arbor arescas, nec afferas folia, neque ramos, neque fructum. Et illico totus aridus factus est.*† At the entreaty of his parents, he afterwards restored the youth to soundness, all but one hand; as an ensample of terror to others. In the Bhagavat, the reader will find strong traits of this story in two beautiful youths, whom the curse of a Brahmin had turned into trees, but whom the touch of Creeshna restores to their former shape.

Still farther to demonstrate the Indian a studied imitation of the Christian narration, as Christ is preceded by John, his cousin and divine herald, who is born only a short time before him, so is Creeshna by Ram, his elder brother, and associate in the arduous work of purifying the polluted earth of monsters and dæmons. He is called the *Fire of Bhagavat*; and, from the same cause, is hurried away, as soon as born, to the same foster-parents which nourished Creeshna. This circumstance also is not without a parallel in the apocryphal Gospels; for, according to that attributed to St. James, the publicity of Zachariah's prophecy concerning the Messiah, and the supernatural pregnancy of his wife, being notorious at Jerusalem, Herod, dis-

* Baldæus apud Churchill, vol. iii. p. 873.

† Evangelium Infantiæ apud Cod. Apoc. Fabricii, vol. i. p. 162.

appointed in the destruction of the infant Jesus, or, perhaps, from these uncommon circumstances attending his nativity, conceiving that John himself might be the predicted Messiah, sent to Zachariah, then attending at the altar, and demanded the child of him, with intent to devote him to slaughter with the other innocents. Elizabeth, however, having previously sent her son into the wilderness, Zachariah positively denied any knowledge of where the infant was; and, persisting in this answer, was slain at the altar by the exasperated soldiers. It is to this Zachariah, and to this fact, according to the same Gospel, that our Saviour alluded, when he uttered his severe denunciation against the Jews for the massacre of the prophets, *from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, who was slain between the temple and the altar.** Matth. xxiii. 35. Had the spurious Gospels contained no greater outrages on sense and Scripture than the above, they would not have excited so much abhorrence in the Christian world.

Soon after the birth of Creeshna, the holy Σοφος, or Indian prophet NARED, hearing of the fame of the infant Creeshna, pays a visit to his supposed father and mother at Gokul, examines the *stars*, consults the *horoscope*, inspects his *hand*, (for, the Indians, in the most ancient periods, practised the art of chiromancy,) and declares him to be of celestial descent; all which has every appearance of being a direct imitation of the account, in sacred story, of the Magi observing the star, and visiting and adoring the infant Saviour in Bethlehem.

It has already been observed, that Mathura, (pronounced Mattra,) on the Jumna, was the city in which Creeshna was born, where his most extraordinary miracles were performed, and which continues at this day the place where his name and Avatar are holden in the most sacred veneration of any province in Hindos-

* Vide Protevangelium Jacobi, p. 23, apud Fabric. p. 25.

tan. These circumstances deserve particular notice; because, the Arabic edition of the Evangelium Infantiæ records MATAREA, near Hermopolis, in Egypt, to have been the place where the infant Saviour resided during his absence from the land of Judæa, and until Herod died. At this place, Jesus is reported to have wrought many miracles; and, among others, to have produced, in that arid region, a fountain of fresh water, the only one in Egypt. *Hinc ad Sycomorum illam digressi sunt, quæ hodie* MATAREA *vocatur; et produxit Dominus Jesus fontem in Matarea, in quo Diva Maria* (Creeshna's mother has also the epithet *Deva* prefixed to her name) *tunicam ejus lavit. Ex sudore autem, qui a Domino Jesu defluxit, balsamum in illa regione provenit.** The town of MATAREA still remains, with the name not in the least altered, being, at this day, called MATAREA. Mr. Savary, who visited the spot in 1777, gives the following account of it. "At a little distance from Heliopolis, is the small village of MATAREA; so called, because it has a fresh-water spring, the only one in Egypt. Probably, the stratum through which the waters of the Nile are filtered, in coming to this spring, does not possess the nitrous quality so common to this country. Tradition has rendered it famous; which says, that the Holy Family, flying from Herod, came hither; and that the Virgin bathed the Holy Child, Jesus, in this fountain. The Christians relate many miracles performed here, and come with great devotion to drink its waters, for the cure of their diseases. The very Mohammedans partake of their veneration."† He adds, that, within the memory of man, the balsam-plant was much cultivated in its neighbourhood; but that, through the despotism of the Arabs, and the convulsions of Egypt, the cultivation of that precious shrub is no longer attend-

* Evangelium Infantiæ, Arabice et Latine, p. 71, edit. Syke, 1697.

† Savary's Travels in Egypt, vol. i. p. 126.

ed to in the country. If we dare not assert the whole story, relative to Creeshna and his adventures at Mathura, to have been a romance, founded on what is recorded in this Apocryphal Gospel concerning Christ and the Holy Family at Matarea, we may rest assured, that the similarity of name and incidents did not operate a little towards inciting them to make the interpolations contended for.

It is remarkable, that one of the first miracles performed by Creeshna, when mature, was the curing of a leper: it is remarkable, I say, because, curing the leprosy is the first miracle recorded of Christ by St. Matthew, with whose Gospel the Evangelium Infantiæ seems to be more particularly connected. The dignified account of Christ's curing the leper is to be found in Matt. viii. 2. Here follows the romantic account, though not without an impressive moral, of that fact, as given in Baldæus, from the authentic sources which he consulted. " A passionate Brahmin having received a slight insult from a certain rajah, on going out of his doors," says our author, " uttered this curse,— That he should, from head to foot, be covered with boils and the leprosy; which being fulfilled in an instant upon the unfortunate king, he prayed to Creeshna to deliver him from this evil, but in vain, his malady increasing every day, so that at last, being quite tired of his life, he resolved to put a period to it by fire. Every thing being got in readiness for this purpose, Kisna appeared to him, asking, What was his request? — He replied, To be freed from my distemper. Kisna cured him not only of his leprosy, but also turned the same into a fiery wheel, which, following the Brahmin wherever he went, put him into such a fright that he offered his prayers to Eendra to deliver him from this fire; but, Eendra telling him that he must apply himself to him who was the author thereof, he made application to Brahma, from whom having received the same answer, he implored the assistance of Kisna, begging him to par-

don his sudden passion, and to deliver him from the evil he had been pleased to lay upon him. Kisna, chiding him for his unruly passion, advised him to lay the same aside for the future, and then delivered him from the plague of the fiery wheel; which is no inapt symbol of the rapid and destructive progress of that fiery passion."*

The cure of Mary Magdalen, out of whom seven devils were cast, (a mode of expression used, perhaps allegorically, for numerous defects and infirmities, mental and corporeal,) and her anointing our Saviour with precious ointments from an alabaster box, are plainly recognized in the following story. "Being advanced a little farther, they met a poor cripple, or lame woman, having a vessel filled with spices, sweet-scented oils, sandal-wood, saffron, civet, and other perfumes. Kisna making a halt, she made a certain sign with her finger on his forehead, casting the rest upon his head. Kisna asking her what it was she would request of him, the woman replied, Nothing but the use of my limbs. Kisna, then, setting his foot upon hers, and taking her by the hand, raised her from the ground, and not only restored her limbs, but also renewed her age, so that, instead of a wrinkled tawny skin, she got a fresh and fair one in an instant. At her request, Kisna and his company lodged the following night in her house."† This story will be found somewhat differently related in the subsequent Life of Creeshna, and in a manner that proves the whole must be understood *allegorically*, and alludes not to *corporeal*, but *mental*, deformity.

The above parallel facts seem to have been copied by the Brahmins immediately from the genuine Gospels; but the greater part of their imitations is derived through the medium of the spurious ones, which, in those times, were more generally diffused through Asia. With two or three more quotations, of a

* Baldæus apud Harris, vol. iii. p. 880. † Ibid, p. 875.

similar kind, from the latter, I shall close the very-extended, but compelled, digression which occasions this second introductory chapter to the History of Creeshna.

Creeshna, being brought up among shepherds, wanted the advantage of a preceptor to teach him the sciences. Afterwards, when he went to Mathura; a tutor, profoundly learned, was obtained for him; but, in a very short time, he became such a scholar as utterly to astonish and perplex his master with a variety of the most intricate questions in Sanscreet science. With this story seems to be intimately connected a corresponding account in the Apocryphal Gospels above alluded to;* where we are informed, that Rabbi Zacchæus, who was the preceptor of the infant Jesus, when he began to teach him the Hebrew alphabet, and wished him to repeat after him Aleph, the holy Child said Beth; and, when he was to pronounce Beth, said Ghimel; and so on to the end of the alphabet. It is added, that, afterwards opening the Bible, and turning to the Prophets, he read the astonished tutor a long lecture out of them, and entered into discussions on the abstrusest topics of the Hebrew theology.

"At a certain time," says the history of our Indian deity, "Creeshna taking a walk with the other cowherds, they chose him their king, and every one had his place assigned him under the new king."† And, in the Evangelium Infantiæ, we read, *Mense autem* Adar *congregavit Jesus pueros, eosque tanquam* REX *disposuit. Straverant enim vestes suas in terra, ut super illas considerет, et coronam e floribus consertam capiti ejus imposuerant.*‡

At page 123 of the Arabic edition of the spurious Gospel, the infant Jesus, declaring himself to be the good *Shepherd*, turns all his young companions into *sheep*; but, afterwards, at the solicitation of their parents, restores them to their proper form. This is

* Codex Apocryphus, vol. i. p. 207, in Cotelerii Versione.

† Baldæus apud Harris, p. 873.

‡ Codex Apocryphus, p. 127.

evidently the counterpart of what will be related, in the subsequent pages, concerning the creation, by Creeshna, of new sheep and new cow-boys, when Brahma, to try the divinity of the former, had stolen those which belonged to Nanda's farm.

Again, Creeshna's combat with the dreadful serpent CALLI-NAGA, who had poisoned all the cowherds, makes a conspicuous, and, as will be hereafter seen, a truly important, part of his history. The Apocryphal Gospel, at page 133 of the edition above alluded to, records a most remarkable adventure of the infant Saviour with a serpent who had poisoned one of his companions; for, he not only compels that serpent to suck back the venom out of the wound, but causes the animal, after repeating upon him the original malediction, to burst asunder with the increased quantity and virus of the poison.

I should be ashamed to insert these puerile fables in the pages of a serious history, were it not absolutely necessary for the proof of the original position, that the Indian legend, the Koran, which may be called the Arabian legend, and the Apocryphal Gospels have an intimate connection; and that the greater part, if not all, of these romantic details are founded on the perversion and mutilation of various parts of the ORIGINAL SCRIPTURES. The investigation was not less unpleasant for myself to make than it may be irksome to some of my readers to peruse; but it would have been very imprudent, and even criminal, after what has been not merely *insinuated*, but boldly *averred*, on the subject, by M. Volney and other sceptics, to have published, especially at this period, the following Life of Creeshna, without every possible effort to guard the reader against accidental misconception as well as purposed misrepresentation.

THE

LIFE

OF

CREESHNA,

THE EIGHTH

INDIAN AVATAR,

FROM THE

BHAGAVAT POORAUN.

PART THE FIRST.

CONTAINING THE EXPLOITS OF CREESHNA DURING HIS INFANCY AND YOUTH, TILL THE DEATH OF CANSA, THE TYRANT KING OF MATHURA.

INTRODUCTION.

In ancient times there lived a certain rajah of the name of Pereecheete, who was particularly famous for his skill in the use of all weapons and in martial science, and who, like his ancestor Rajah Pandoo, had an extreme passion for the chase. On a certain day, having wounded a deer, but not killed it, the animal bounded rapidly away, and the rajah pursued it so long that he was overpowered with thirst and fatigue. In that state he arrived at a jungle, in the secluded solitude of which dwelt a reyshee intensely pious, whose austerities were such, that he subsisted entirely on the drops of milk which fell from the mouths of calves in the act of sucking. Rajah Pereecheete immediately mentioned his name and rank, and demanded of the reyshee if he had seen the deer that had escaped. The reyshee, absorbed in profound devotion, did not hear a word. The rajah repeated his question, and, at the same time, earnestly demanded the refreshment of a little water. Still the reyshee did not hear him. The rajah, enraged at this apparent neglect of the holy man, picked up with the horn of his bow, a dead snake, which happened to lie near, threw it on the reyshee's neck, and departed. This same reyshee had a son named Senekee, a complete professor of mortifications, which he practised with such extreme severity, that the skin of his whole body had grown fast to his bones; but, at that moment, he happened to be absent. Brahma, softened by his great austerities, had granted the latter a boon, and he was returning home, in great joy, to his father, when he was met by one of his friends, who told him what the rajah had done to that father. Senekee was extremely afflicted at the relation, and conceived, at first, that

his father must have been guilty of some great incivility; but, on being convinced by his friend of the contrary, and that the snake was still on his father's neck, his eyes grew inflamed, his passion rose to a great height, and, in his rage, he uttered this curse: "O God! may he, who has dared unjustly to cast a dead snake on my father's neck, be bitten, after seven days, by the serpent Tejhek, and die!" All the virtuous and good were extremely concerned when they were acquainted with this curse, as they had enjoyed much comfort under the rajah's government. The rajah, too, convinced that he must take the road to death, and that, at the appointed time of seven days, the serpent would inevitably bite him, dissmissed all his attendants, and strayed solitary and pensive down towards the banks of the river, esteeming it most advisable to resign his soul on the margin of the pure water of Ganga.

Vyasa, the Brahmin, was the first of inspired prophets; he had a son, named Sekedeva, who remained twelve years in his mother's womb absorbed in devotion. This holy man, while in his mother's womb, had heard the sage Nared relate to Vyasa the whole of the history of Creeshna, contained in twelve Skendes, and had it completely in memory from beginning to end. When, therefore, this account of the curse, pronounced by Senekee Reyshee on Rajah Pereecheete, came to his ears, he pondered in mind by what means he might remedy it; and, knowing the wonderful effect which the narration of the life of Creeshna would have on the hearer, determined to repeat to the rajah, in the space of seven days, the whole of the story which he learnt in his mother's womb. Sekedeva, in consequence, approached the rajah and consoled him. The rajah embraced his foot, and reverently said, "Now I know that I shall not go to an untimely grave since I have been favoured with a sight of you; by the advantage of your pure presence, and by hearing the history of Shree Creeshna, I shall be secure from the threatened death; begin, therefore, speedily, as the fated time is only seven days." Sekedeva commenced accordingly the sublime relation.

THE LIFE OF CREESHNA.

AT a period when the Earth was become overloaded with injustice and oppression, she assumed the form of a milch-cow,* and went to utter her complaints to the *creator* Brahma. Brahma, taking compassion on her, directed and accompanied her to Mahadeva, because, of the three sovereign deities that preside over the universe, Mahadeva is the *avenger*. When arrived at Kylass, the capital of the latter deity, before Brahma had spoken, Mahadeva, knowing the object of their visit, observed that there was a third sacred personage, the redresser of the evils of the world, and that they ought all to recollect *the preserver* Veeshnu.† In consequence, Brahma, with Mahadeva, the milch-cow, and other attendant Devatas, repaired all together to Vaicontha, the palace of Veeshnu. At their entrance a secret voice informed them their complaints should be redressed, adding, "I will become incarnate at Mathura in the house of YADU, and will issue forth to mortal birth from the womb of Devaci. Since, in their former life, Vasudeva and Devaci‡ have, by earnest prayer and penance, besought of me a son; and, since Nanda and Yasodha|| have merited my protection, it is time that I should display my power in that region, and relieve the oppressed

* This idea is perfectly in unison with that in the Egyptian system of mythology, where Isis, the universal mother, the Dea Multimamma, was symbolized by a *cow*.

† Hence it is manifest that the Bhagavat was written by one of the sect of Veeshnu, since this is evidently said with an intent to exalt the power and consequence of Veeshnu above those of the two former deities.

‡ Creeshna's real father and mother.

|| Creeshna's foster father and mother.

Earth from its load." After this declaration, Brahma, Mahadeva, with the other Devatas, and that milch-cow, which is the Earth personified, departed to their respective habitations.

Mathura was, at that time, the capital of the kingdom of the Yadavas, and had, for its sovereign, a prince named CANSA, a merciless tyrant, the son of Ogur Sein, whom he had deposed, and on whose usurped throne he reigned. Cansa, young himself, had a sister much younger, who, on being arrived at a proper age, he bestowed in marriage on a Brahmin of royal descent and eminent for his piety, whose residence was at Gokul, a city situated three cose higher on the other side of the Jumna. The bridegroom had reached his nineteenth year, the bride her twelfth, the usual period of espousal in Hindostan; both happily ignorant of the disasters that awaited their union. The most splendid preparations were made for the celebration of the marriage, and Cansa gave his sister Devaci a portion worthy of so potent a monarch. It consisted, according to the custom of the country in those periods, of four hundred stout elephants, fifteen hundred chosen horses, eighteen thousand carriages adorned with gold and jewels, besides other valuable articles, and a great sum in money. He himself, on the day of their marriage, to do them honour, sat on the same car with Vasudeva and Devaci in the place of the driver. On their return from celebrating the nuptials, he heard a voice, saying, "Cansa, beware! the eighth son of Devaci will be your destroyer." Cansa was exceedingly alarmed at this intelligence; he let fall the reins on the neck of the horses, and, seizing Devaci by the hair of her head with one hand, drew his sword with the other with intent to cut it off, when Vasudeva represented to him that a woman was not liable to be killed for any crime, particularly as she was his own sister. After much expostulation, Vasudeva promised, and solemnly engaged, to give up to Cansa all the children whom Devaci should bring forth, which he might have liberty to destroy for his own security. Cansa at length consented that she should live, and went directly to his palace,

giving orders to keep Vasudeva and Dęvaçi in strict confinement.

Devaci, in the course of as many years, had eight children, seven sons and one daughter. As soon as the first was born, Vasudeva himself carried it to Cansa; who, satisfied with the offer, and reflecting that it would be equally useless and unjust to destroy the first male for the sake of the eighth, returned it to Vasudeva, who joyfully bore it away, though not without suspicion that the tyrant would alter his mind. At the same time the sage Nared came to Cansa and thus addressed him: "Why do you slumber over your own destruction? the child now dismissed perhaps may be your destroyer." Nared then went away: and Cansa, re-demanding the child, instantly put it to death, in spite of the remonstrances of Ogur Sein, his mother, and the surrounding nobles. He even threw his own father into prison for opposing him, and doubled his vigilance over Vasudeva and Devaci; ordering them both into still closer confinement in the inmost apartment of a prison, only accessible through seven iron doors. In process of time Cansa, in the same manner, destroyed six of Devaci's children. When she became pregnant a seventh time, a secret voice exclaimed, "Take this FIRE of mine, which is in Devaci's womb, and carry it to Gokul, and place it in that of Roheenee, out of the reach of Cansa." When the fire of Bhagavat (the third Rama, Creeshna's elder brother) was thus transplanted from the womb of Dévaci to that of Roheenee, Devaci thought she had miscarried, and this account obtained credit in the town and palace. After some time, Devácì again grew pregnant, and, by the blessing of heaven on this pregnancy, her beauty suddenly shone forth with such transcendent splendour, that Vasudeva, her husband's countenance itself became bright, and the very wall of her chamber was illuminated. Shortly after, Brahma and Mahadeva, with a chorus of other Devatas, came thither, and, celebrating with songs the praises of Vasudeva and Devaci, exclaimed, "In the delivery of this favoured woman all nature shall have cause to exult;

how ardently do we long to behold that face for the sake of which we have coursed round the three worlds." Cansa, on these auspicious signs of the pregnancy of Devaci, the report of which spread instantly through the palace, and, hearing at the same time that the faces of the father and mother were suddenly become so transcendently bright, imagined, for a certainty, that this was the child that should slay him, and consulted with his wisest counsellors whether he should not at once destroy Devaci; but, again reflecting that it was on all accounts horrible to kill a pregnant woman, he contented himself with the fixed determination to devote the child to death the instant it was born. The tyrant of Mathura, however, was continually haunted with the idea of the *eighth son*,* his fated destroyer; and the avenger of his crimes appeared ever in his view.

At length, in the month Bhadron, at deep midnight, on the eighth of that month, on a Wednesday, at a time when the world was distracted with tumults and contention, in the house of Vasudeva, *appeared* the miraculous child, the celestial phænomenon, conspicuous with eight arms. The moment Vasudeva saw the infant, his eyes were opened, he knew it to be the Almighty, and Devaci and himself immediately began their devout addresses. After

* Baldæus, from other sources of intelligence on the Malabar-coast where he resided, makes Creeshna the *seventh* son of this marriage; but, as Feizi, the brother of Acber's secretary, translated the Bhagavat into Persian immediately from the Sanscreet, which he learnt by being educated under a Brahmin; the above account, of the *eighth* son being the destroyer of Cansa, is more likely to be the true one. "Upon this occasion," says Baldæus, "I cannot but observe, that this, as well as the ensuing part of the story of *Kisna*, (Creeshna,) seems to have a near relation to the history of the birth of our Saviour, his flight into Egypt, the murder of the innocent children by Herod, Christ's miracles and ascension, &c." The learned missionary might have easily accounted for the similitude, had he reflected for a moment on the numerous disciples of St. Thomas, who formerly flourished in that very region of India to which he went as missionary, and who probably early imported thither both the genuine and the spurious Gospels. The artless and illiterate apostles were certainly never acquainted with the Poorauns of India, but the Magi and the Brahmins, as has been already amply demonstrated, had among them, in the native dialects of Asia, the spurious Gospel attributed to St. Thomas, and all the adulterated theology professed by the Nestorians, the Manichees, and other eastern sects of Christians, much of which they probably incorporated with their own legends.

some time thus employed, the Creator of the world again closed the eyes of Vasudeva's and Devaci's understanding, and they again *thought* that a child was born unto them. A secret voice was then heard distinctly to utter these words: "Son of Yadu, take up this child and carry it to Gokul to the house of Nanda, where Yasodha hath this moment been delivered of a daughter, which is to be conveyed with celerity hither." Vasudeva, struck with astonishment, answered, "How shall I obey this injunction, thus vigilantly guarded and barred in by seven iron doors that prohibit all egress?" The unknown voice replied, "The doors shall open of themselves to let thee pass, and behold I have caused a deep slumber to fall upon thy guards, which shall continue till thy journey be accomplished." Vasudeva immediately felt his chains miraculously loosened, and, taking up the child in his arms, hurried with it through all the doors, the guards being buried in profound sleep. When he came to the Jumna, the waters immediately rose up to kiss the child's feet, and then respectfully retired on each side to make way for its transportation. Vasudeva with the utmost speed proceeded in the execution of his commission, and, reaching the house of Nanda, punctually fulfilled all that he was enjoined. Yasodha, in fact, knew not that she had been delivered of a daughter; for, the interposing deity had brought forgetfulness on her, and, when Vasudeva was gone, she took the child he had left for her son. On Vasudeva's return to the banks of the Jumna the waters miraculously divided as before, he once more passed dry-shod to the opposite shore, and, the moment he reached the chamber of his prison, the chains again came upon his feet and hands, the locks became all closed, the guards awakened, and all heard the child cry; on which, they hastened to give notice to Cansa, who immediately ran, undressed as he was, to the prison, where Devaci, with both hands, trembling, presented to him her infant. Cansa received it with a frowning and terrific countenance, and was going to dash it against the stones, when the child suddenly darted from his hands, and

mounted up into the air, bedecked with all the splendid ornaments and numerous arms of a Devata, exclaiming with a loud voice, as in a flash of lightning she departed, " O Cansa! the punishment you merit in attempting my destruction awaits yourself; be assured that your destroyer also *is already born.*" Cansa was appalled, and trembled exceedingly at beholding this miracle. After a variety of bitter and painful reflections on the instability of human affairs, he determined to release Vasudeva and Devaci from confinement; and thus terminated the events of that wonderful night!

The next morning at sun-rise Cansa summoned a council, to know what was to be done in this moment of dreadful emergency. It was resolved, that, since he was now certain by the Devata's threat that his destroyer was already born, he should cause all the young children throughout his kingdom to be slain; and, if by chance any escaped, that he then should extend his severity to the Zennardars and penitents, when undoubtedly the Devatas, their protectors, would make the discovery. It was also resolved, that soldiers should be employed in the strictest search after the concealed enemy, and that very day the cruel orders were issued. In the mean time, Nanda, who had long wished for a son, was exceedingly elated with the child left by Vasudeva, which Yasodha took for her own, magnificently entertained all Gokul, conferred abundance of alms, worshipped all the Devatas, got together all the necessary preparations, and, by the assistance of the Divine wisdom, named the child Creeshna, because his sacred body was of *a black complexion.** After the lapse of some days, Nanda, in going to Mathura on his domestic concerns, paid a visit to Vasudeva, who, after congratulating him on the birth of his son, informed him of the savage mandate issued by Cansa for destroying all the young children, and advised him to be vigilant. Nanda, alarmed at the dreadful intelligence, lost no time in settling his affairs in the city, and returned the same day to Gokul. A gigantic fiend, in the form of a woman, by name

* More properly *dark blue,* the colour of all the Avatars, to mark their celestial descent.

Pootna, a nurse of infant children, had obtained of Cansa permission to be the dire agent in destroying the hapless innocents; and this fury, going out of Mathura, let them suck her breasts, and killed them all with her poisoned nipples. Arriving at Gokul, she concealed her own deformed figure under that of a beautiful woman, and presented herself at Nanda's door, where stood Yasodha and Roheenee, (the supposed mother of Rama,) and they, seduced by her appearance, admitted her into the house. She immediately cast her eyes on the cradle of the young Creeshna, and began to fondle him and put her nipple into his mouth. The child, however, instantly drew it forth with such force, that blood gushed forth instead of milk,* and she fell down dead at his feet. Immediately, on touching the ground, her body resumed its natural gigantic shape, and covered no less than six cose. At her death the heavens and the earth resounded as at that of Beret Assoor Ditye, whom Eendra slew with his bejre. The men of Gokul employed labourers to cut the body limb from limb with sharp weapons, and burnt it with faggots, collected together with great difficulty, from the number requisite for its consumption. The smoke that ascended from the pile perfumed the whole neighbourhood; for, having been slain by Creeshna, his touch gave her body the fragrance of the richest aromatics, and secured her MOOKT, or eternal beatitude. Nature felt the shock of Pootna's fall, and, while the inhabitants of Gokul were stricken with wonder and affright, Yasodha, astonished, beheld her young infant playing on the breast of the

* Thus Hercules is said to have sucked the breast of Juno with such violence, as to spill a great quantity of the milk, which, overflowing the sky, formed in it the milky way. The cause of the striking similitude in this and other instances between Creeshna and Hercules is well accounted for in the following passage of Mr. Wilford's Dissertation. "The Greeks, who certainly migrated from Egypt, carried with them the old Egyptian and Indian legends, and endeavoured (not always with success) to appropriate a foreign system to their new settlements: all their heroes or demi-gods, named Heracles by them, and Hercules by the Latians, (if not by the Æolians,) were sons of Jupiter, who is represented in India both by Hera, or Seeva, and by Heri, or Veeshnu; nor can I help suspecting that Hercules is the same with Heracula, commonly pronounced Hercul, and signifying the race of Hera or Heri. Those heroes are celebrated in the concluding book of the Mahabbarat, entitled Herivansa."

dead monster. She instantly ran and snatched him away, and began to pray to all the Devatas to protect him. Cansa, when he heard that a sucking child had slain Pootna, was terribly alarmed, and again summoned a council, at which, a Zinnardar, named Seedher, engaged to slay both Ram and Creeshna. Accordingly he went to Gokul, and was there most kindly received by Yasodha: he immediately entreated to see the children: Yasodha desired him to wait till they awoke, and till she should return from bathing in the Jumna. This was the very opportunity he wished for, to destroy the child in the mother's absence. With that fell intent he advanced towards Creeshna's cradle; but the child exclaimed, "Ha! are you coming to kill me?" and, starting up in his cradle, seized the assassin by the two hands, and, though he would not kill him, disjointed him in such a manner that he fell to the ground like a dead tree, utterly deprived of speech. Creeshna returned to his cradle, and, after rubbing some bream in his mouth, lay down again as composed as if nothing had happened. In this state was the Zinnardar found by Yasodha, but, as he was speechless, he could only point with his hand towards the cradle. Yasodha immediately conceived that he was an emissary sent by Cansa to dispatch the child, and, calling aloud for assistance, thrust him out of the town.

In Nanda's court-yard there by chance stood a large carriage, on which Yasodha placed the child's cradle; and, as soon as he was asleep, busied herself in some other affairs of her farm. When the child awoke, it cried for victuals; and, becoming impatient, began to kick most violently, and presently kicked the carriage all to pieces. Nanda, coming back soon after, conceived that the child had escaped some other great calamity; nor would he believe the other children, playing near the spot, who told him the infant had done it; but again distributed abundance of alms for his son's escape.

One day, Ternaveret, a raksha, by order of Cansa, went to Gokul; and first raised such a tempest, that the whole place was in-

volved in midnight darkness: then, assuming the form of a whirlwind, he carried Creeshna up aloft into the air. During the consternation, occasioned by this circumstance, Nanda and Yasodha saw the raksha fall suddenly to the ground, with a noise like the fall of Pootna, and Creeshna playing on his breast, whence Nanda instantly snatched him away. Another day, as Yasodha was fondling and kissing her dear infant, he opened his mouth, and she saw therein the heavens and the earth, the sun and moon, sea and land, the mountains and valleys of the whole world. She was astonished, and began to think herself seized with sudden insanity; nor afterwards could she tell what to make of this wonderful child; but, from that day, took him to all the doctors and magicians, adorned his neck with amulets, had him charmed, and collected together a great quantity of tigers' claws and bears' hair to drive away impending danger.

Cansa still offering great rewards for the extermination of Creeshna, a certain Ditya, assuming the figure of a huge crow, promised the king to destroy both the children by pecking out their eyes; but they soon squeezed it to death, and threw the corpse to the ground; while a great noise was heard like thunder, so that all the people in the neigbourhood, being alarmed, flew with speed to the spot, wondering who had killed this crow, and whence had proceeded the noise. Vasudeva, in constant fear of Çansa, had sent Roheenee, as soon as she proved pregnant, to Gokul, and concealed the circumstance of her having been delivered of a son. One day, he requested of Nared and Garga, two celebrated prophets and astrologers, to go to Gokul, to cast the nativity of the child, (Ram,) and give him a name; acquainting them, at the same time, with his apprehensions concerning Cansa. Nanda, at Gokul, gave the seers a most welcome reception; when Garga informed him, they were sent by Vasudeva to give a name to Roheenee's child. Nanda wished them also to give a name to *his* child. Nared, having calculated the horoscope for Roheenee's son, named him Ram; and

said, men would also call him Bali, on account of his superior strength. He then cast his eyes on *Creeshna's stars*, and presently pronounced that he was not the son of Nanda, but of Vasudeva and Devaci; expressing at the same time his wonder at Devaci's having a daughter, when he knew of her pregnancy. He insisted that this must be Devaci's eighth son, and the daughter, Nanda's child; nor could he be prevailed upon to give him any other name. The hoary priest, with his comrade, after this solemn declaration, returned to Mathura. Mean time, the two children always remained inseparable, and learned to walk together, either round their beds, or by holding a calf's tail in their hands. Creeshna, in particular, grew daily more and more in favour with the Gopias, or milk-maids, of Nanda's farm, and became extremely fond of playing them tricks; spilling their milk, stealing their cream, and always making cunning escapes, or shuffling excuses: so that Nanda's house resounded with their complaints. Yet still they were all in love with the wanton little urchin. One day, Belender, with Soodata, Sheedarman, and other herdsmen, came and told Yasodha, that Creeshna had eaten up all the curd, which extremely incensed that prudent dame. But Creeshna denied the fact, and desired her to look in his mouth; which she did, by opening it with one hand, and holding both his in her other. She there, a second time, to her utter astonishment, saw the whole world displayed; and then at length her mind became enlightened, and she knew him to be the ALMIGHTY. However, Creeshna, knowing the time was not yet arrived for the awful discovery, clouded her understanding again, and she, once more, conceived him to be really and properly her son.

Creeshna now grew apace; and one day was playing about in his mother's arms, while she was making butter out of the cream; but, accidentally, a pot of milk boiling over, she put away the child to take care of the pot. Creeshna, thinking she liked the milk better than himself, threw all the cream down; and, seeing his mother

angry, affected to run away, the mother pursuing him till she was quite out of breath; at length, the amiable and affectionate child, perceiving that she tired herself in the pursuit, *suffered* her to catch him. She then endeavoured to tie the hands of the little urchin; but all the string she had or could procure would not suffice, till at length he himself *permitted* it to be enough. As he had given Yasodha and the Gopias so much trouble, they came all together and tied him to two trees, which stood in Nanda's court-yard, and which, in fact, were Neel and Koovere, two sons of Koovere Nehedaree, whom the sage Nared had transformed into trees by a curse. Of that transformation this is the history.

Neel and Koovere, the sons of Koovere Nehedaree, were sporting and amusing themselves on the mountain Kylas; and, equally intoxicated with wine and youth, were enjoying the company of some beautiful women on the banks of a lake, near which that venerable Brahmin was performing his adorations to God and playing on his veena. The young men were not at all ashamed of being discovered, and would have proceeded to the gratification of their desires, but the women were abashed at being found in unseemly attitudes, and retired to a covert. Nared severely reproved the youths, and concluded with a srap, or curse, that they should bear the impression of having been thus seen by him on that mountain, until, after a time, by the happiness of kissing Creeshna's feet, who would be born in Gokul for the purpose of healing the griefs of his devotees, they should emerge from the shape and body of trees, and again receive the form of Devatas. Jemla and Arjea are two sorts of tree into which these youths were transformed on the very moment of Nared's curse, and grew in Gokul. When Yasodha had bound Creeshna to a mill, he struggled and rolled about till he got to these two trees; then, fastening the cord to them, he made an effort to tear them up, placing his feet against them. Immediately the two trees came up by the roots, and fell to the ground. On the miraculous fall of these trees there was a great uproar in all the three worlds of

Deva Lok, Mertye Lok, and Patal, and two beautiful youths issued from them, who, with joined hands, laid their heads at Creeshna's feet; and, having performed their devotions, disappeared.

On the falling of the two trees, Nanda again conceived that his son had escaped another great calamity, and liberal charities were given on the occasion by himself and all the men of Gokul. The children who were playing about, and had seen the whole transaction, were not believed when they related the appearance of the two young men and their adoration of Creeshna's feet. Nanda asking Creeshna if *he* had seen any persons, he answered "No." As some new evil seemed every day to threaten them, the men of Gokul came to a resolution of quitting the place, and Nanda advised them to remove to Binderaben, an excellent spot, and close to the mountain Goverdhana. Accordingly, finding a lucky moment, they mounted their goods on carriages and departed with their cattle; and, on their arrival there, they unloaded their goods and made an inclosure with the carriages. Creeshna was at this time about five years old, and was sent into the field to attend the calves to pasture. One day, by order of Cansa, Vetes Assoor Ditye came thither, in form of a three-years-old cow, and attempted to molest Creeshna. The omniscient child soon knew it not to be a cow, and asked his brother Balhadur Rama if he knew who it was: then, putting his hand on one horn and holding by the other, he threw it on the ground with such violence that it was killed by the blow, and he returned to his play with the other cow-herds. Another day Pek Assoor Ditya came thither, and, sitting on the bank of the Jumna, waited for Creeshna's coming, to swallow him up like a fish. The cow-keepers coming thither found this Pek Assoor, like a huge alligator, lying on the river's side, and told Creeshna; who, on seeing it, knew it to be Pek Assoor and not a fish. Immediately on his coming near, the alligator seized him with his jaws, and swallowed him, rejoicing that now he had accomplished the ardent desire of his sovereign. But Creeshna began to burn the entrails of the finny monster, so that he had no

power to retain his prey, but threw up Creeshna again from his mouth. Still wishing to seize him again, he stretched out his snout, when Creeshna, seizing the two parts with his two hands, tore his jaws asunder, and then bathed in the river in great tranquillity. The cow-keepers on returning home told all these things to Nanda, and all men observed that these calamities pursued Creeshna; but concluded, that, as his destiny had saved him from Pootna, so it would continue to preserve him in all other cases.

It was customary with Creeshna, the cow-keepers, and herds, to wander sometimes about the mountain Goverdhana and sometimes in Binderaben. One day, at the instigation of Cansa, Aghe Assoor Ditya came to revenge the death of his brothers Vetes Assoor and Pek Assoor, and, assuming the shape of a dragon, sat at the end of a road. One of his jaws touched the ground and the other was stretched up to the clouds, while his mouth yawned like the pass in a mountain. Creeshna, Balhadur, and the others, soon came that way to his great joy. As none but Creeshna knew what it was, but thought the object before them to be a hollow way, one and all with their herds went into the dragon's mouth, and Creeshna pitying their situation followed them. At that time Devatas, Veedyadhers, Deivs, and Rakshas, hovered in the air to behold the event; the two first in great anxiety lest Creeshna and the rest should be destroyed, and the Deivs and Rakshas exulting from their attachment to Cansa. Creeshna, though a child, made himself so large and ponderous, and so fastened his body in the monster's throat, that he could not bring his jaws together, and the whole passage was blocked up in such a manner, that no breath could escape; while his soul, being streightened with the pain, fled from the body of the dragon, and began to turn in the air like a flame of fire. The Devatas in transport sang JEYE! JEYE! and rained flowers; that flame of fire coming back was extinguished in Creeshna's mouth, and the whole company with their herds came out of the dragon, and returned safely home to their usual occupations. The dragon's body drying remained a long time in that place

like a mountain, and the children used to play upon it; but his soul obtained liberation through Creeshna. Creeshna observed to the other cow-boys that this dead dragon was of great use to them on the banks of the river, where before there was only plain ground, either for the purpose of playing upon, or of looking from that eminence after the stray cattle. Happy, happy, envied cow-boys! who, day and night, enjoyed the company of Creeshna, and partook of his food and shared his affection!

It happened one day, while they were all together sitting in the shade, that the calves strayed away; Creeshna immediately promised to collect them and bring them back; but, mounting up into a tree, he could not obtain a sight of them. The fact was, that on that day evil suggestions had seized Brahma's mind,* who could not reconcile to himself that the Devatas should all take this child, who had slain Pek Assoor and Aghe Assoor, for the Creator of the world; and, by way of trial, he determined to steal away both cattle and boys; being convinced, that Creeshna, if he were the Almighty, could soon create others. Accordingly he stole them all away, and hid them in a cave of the mountain quite inaccessible. Creeshna, after a little reflection, discovered this crafty trick of Brahma; and immediately, by his power, created other calves and boys, in all things, as well in temper as external marks, perfect resemblances of the others, which he carried to the place where they had been sitting, and at night they went home with him as usual. The cows all took them for their own calves, and ran to meet them and give them milk, and fondly licked them. The fathers and mothers also of the children took each, respectively, for their own; so that not the least suspicion of the counterfeit arose among them: nay, the maternal and filial affections were even greater than before. An entire year passed in this manner; when one day, the milch-cows, grazing by the

* The reader will be pleased constantly to bear in mind, that the Bhagavat is the production of one of the sect of Veeshnu, anxious to exalt the peculiar deity of his devotion above Brahma and Mahadeva.

mountain where Brahma had concealed the calves, heard the lowing of their own offspring; and, at an unusual time of the day, began to give down their milk to their young. Brahma was astonished at the circumstance, and did not know whether they were newly-created calves, or those he had stolen; nor could he, after the closest examination, perceive any difference between them. His senses were for a time totally lost in amazement, and strayed from his body. Sometimes he thought that he saw all the cow-bows of the form and colour of Creeshna; and, at others, he seemed to behold Brahma and Mahadeva, and all the Devatas, in praises and adoration, standing before each cow-boy. Thus having for a time been deprived of intellect, as a punishment for his temerity, Brahma at length returned to his senses, as if he had awaked from sleep; and, rubbing his eyes and starting from his place, came and prostrated all his four heads at Creeshna's feet in a fit of the deepest repentance. Nor could Creeshna for a time mitigate the severe sense of shame which he experienced from the remembrance of his past folly. Brahma now commenced a long oration in apology for his conduct; and, after a multitude of excuses, the calves which had been created instead of those he had stolen, and which he saw before his eyes, dissappeared; and, though one entire year had elapsed during this degraded state of Brahma, it seemed to be no more than a moment since it happened: for, notwithstanding this presumptuous idea of trying Creeshna's omnipotence arose on Aghe Assoor's being slain, he, at this very moment, beheld the spot of ground where Creeshna had been sitting and eating with the other cow-boys, he saw him now in the act of collecting together the calves, and he heard the cow-boys, on their seeing Creeshna, calling out to him to make haste, adding, that they had not tasted any thing during his absence. Creeshna after this dismissed Brahma in comfort, and he himself sat down and finished his meal with the boys, returned homeward with them in the evening, and by the way began to play on his flute, when men, and birds, and beasts, and Devatas, were ravished with

pleasure. The Gopias, when he came near their habitations, all ran out and stood in the road to hear him, and tears of pleasure fell from their eyes, while their hearts yearned towards the gentle Creeshna. — The rajah here interrupted the narration, and asked of Sekedeva, Why did the Gopias prefer Creeshna to their property and their children? Sekedeva answered, "There is nothing in the world dearer than property and children except life, and, therefore, Veeshnu Perebrahm, which is in our bodies, is most dear. When a person is in pain will he look to his wealth and children instead of procuring ease to his soul? Therefore Creeshna is the soul of all the world, and nothing is so dear as the soul."

Thus Creeshna, though only five years old, amused himself, and Balhadur, his brother, and the other cow-boys, with all sorts of children's sports when they ranged together in the woods or on the banks of the ponds. One day a cow-boy professed a desire to go and eat the delicious fruits of the TAL ben, but had heard that it was haunted by a raksha named Dhenek, whose dreadful character for rapacity and cruelty prevented all persons from going thither. Creeshna, however, led them to the ben, and they all began to gather the fruit, when the noise they made among the dry leaves awakened the raksha, who was sleeping there in the form of a wild ass. Immediately starting up, he ran towards them with his attendants, ploughing up the earth with his hoofs and teeth, and coming up to Balhadur, who was first, struck with his two fore-feet on his breast, and, retreating, endeavoured to repeat his blow; but Balhadur, with one of his hands, caught both the fore-feet of the raksha, lifted him up in the air, and, swinging him over his head, threw him on the ground with such force that his soul fled from his body. After which Balhadur and Creeshna each killed a number of the species of wild animal whose body that soul had animated. The cow-boys afterwards, in perfect security, plucked as much fruit as they chose, and returned home.

An infinite variety of these adventures caused the name of Creeshna to be venerated by the good, and terrible to the wicked. Monsters in nature and monsters out of nature were perpetually conjured up to attack the divine infant, who, with ease, discomfited them all, and gained new glory from every fresh combat. At length the great envenomed serpent KALLI NAGA (literally *black* or *evil serpent)* determined to try his strength with him, and, with his enormous bulk, took possession of the river Jumna, in whose bed he lay concealed and whose stream he poisoned. The instant that the cattle tasted the water they fell down dead on the banks, and the cow-boys, going in the evening to bathe in the river, as soon as they were immersed and their lips touched the flood, they also expired. Creeshna, being informed of this dreadful calamity, immediately hastened down to the river-side, and, by his omniscient power, soon discovered the cause. As his former companions lay dead in multitudes around him, he was filled with compassion at their untimely fate, and, *casting upon them an eye of divine mercy,* they immediately arose, and, with looks of astonishment, inquired what disaster had befallen them, and what enchantment had deprived them of their senses and recollection? He restored also the cattle to life, and all, when evening approached, went quietly home to their several occupations at Nanda's farm.

In the mean time, the passage of the river being obstructed by the recumbent serpent, and extirpation threatened both to men and beasts by the poisoned waters, Creeshna determined at all events to attack the usurper, and clear the river of its deadly infection.* He assumed no other appearance than that infantine one which naturally belonged to him in the assumed veil of mortality; nor armed himself with any other panoply than the sacred *chank*, and the innocence of a child. The next morning, therefore, at a time when Balhadur

* As this whole history is allegorical, I cannot here avoid remarking, that the *waters of death*, the dire Lethean river, may here be alluded to, whose poison a Greater than Creeshna has removed, after vanquishing the serpent, the fatal cause of that irremeable stream being tainted.

was not with them, he went with the other boys and the cows and calves to the side of the river, where the serpent was sleeping; and, getting up into a palm-tree on the river's side, he began clapping his hands so violently, and sounded the sacred shell so loud, that the old serpent awoke, and lifted up his heads to see who it was that had the insolence to disturb him. Creeshna leapt from the tree into the water, and dashed it about violently with his two hands. The Devatas, alarmed by the noise, came to behold the spectacle. The serpent vomited streams of fire from his mouth and nostrils, aimed at once a thousand bites with his thousand heads, and twisted his enormous folds round Creeshna's whole body. On seeing this, the cow-boys fell down in despair. The unhappy omen was soon published throughout Gokul and the farm. Roheenee, and Yasodha, and all the men and women, immediately hastened together to the spot by the tracts of the cows and calves; and, as they did not observe Creeshna among the cow-boys, eagerly inquired of them where he was; but they were so utterly absorbed in grief and apprehension that they returned no answer. This silence threw the whole multitude into complete despair, and they fell prostrate to the ground. Balhadur, however, came at last, and he consoled the Gopas and Gopias, by assuring them that Creeshna would overcome this the greatest of all dangers with the same ease as he had that of Pootna, Tèrnaveret, and other Dityas and Rakshas. Creeshna, at length, seeing they were all come thither out of their extreme anxiety on his account, to relieve them, took hold of the serpent's heads, one after another; and, tearing them from his body, SET HIS FOOT ON THEM, and began to dance in triumph on each of them.* The

* See this fact represented on the sphere, where the foot of *Hercules* presses down the head of the *serpent*. The account of Baldæus of this part of the contest will perhaps better explain the second of the allegorical plases illustrative of it, on which he is represented enfolded in the body of the serpent, while the irritated animal is seen *biting his foot*. "The serpent Kalli Naga, swelling with rage, now flew upon Creeshna, and beat him backwards; but he, recovering himself, squeezed the serpent's head to that degree, that, not knowing what to do, he twisted himself about his body: but Creeshna gradually increased the bulk of his body in such a manner, that the

monster struggled in vain; and, after expending all his poison, found himself totally overwhelmed by the superior power of his antagonist, who might properly be called *the strength of the world.* The wife of the serpent, and his children, (for, all the gods, superior and inferior, of India are married,) now came to the water-side, and entreated Creeshna to release him, acknowledging that they knew the Saviour of the world to have been born in Gokul; and that he, who is under his foot, whether as a friend or an enemy, has, by that circumstance, secured his liberation. They plead the serpent's malignant disposition and constitution to have been given him by Creeshna himself; and, among other apologies, observe, that, in consequence of this event, the name of Kalli-Naga will subsist to the end of the world, since each of his heads has been honoured with a touch of *Creeshna's foot.* Creeshna at length took pity on the serpent's wife and children; and said to him, "Begone quickly into the abyss; this place is not proper for thee. Since I have combated with thee, thy name shall remain during all the period of time; and Devatas and men shall henceforth remember thee without dismay." So the serpent, with his wife and children, went into the abyss; and all that water, which had been infected by his poison, became pure and wholesome.

After this victory, Creeshna came out of the water, in external appearance shuddering and shivering like a child, and clung close to his mother's side. Yasodha and all the Gopias were extremely alarmed, except only Balhadur, who was smiling. Nanda remarked this, and concluded that he would not have smiled if there had been any real danger. On asking him, he replied, "That he laughed to

serpent, ready to burst by being so enormously distended, was forced to let go his hold, being ready to drop down dead for want of strength." This gradual distention of the body of Creeshna, until he made it too large and ponderous for the voluminous folds of the serpent to entwine, ought to have been represented on the plate; but I did not choose to alter the engraving, except in the circumstance of giving a face to Creeshna more compatible with the extreme youth and acknowledged beauty of the young deity.

think Creeshna was totally fearless while treading on the serpent's thousand heads with his feet, yet now stood trembling by the side of his mother." The day beginning to draw near its close, all the people, both small and great, eat and drank there, and laid down to sleep. Suddenly, at midnight, they found themselves in the midst of a fire which had seized the jungle on all sides of them, so that there seemed no way for them to escape its fury. They were all quickly roused, and their whole care was how to save Creeshna. He, knowing their thoughts, took all the fire into his mouth and swallowed it, and no one knew how it was extinguished, but all thought it had died away of itself. After returning thanks to God for their delivery, they went in the morning to Bindreben to their usual occupations.

While Creeshna and the other children were amusing themselves with sports suitable to their age, a certain gigantic Ditya assumed the figure of a young child and mixed with them, undiscovered by all but Creeshna, who told Ram of it. They then proposed a play, in which the conquerors should ride on the backs of the losers, and Ram was in one party and Creeshna in the other. Ram's party conquered and each mounted upon his fellow. Ram rode upon the giant, who, now thinking the day was gained, mounted up into the air with Ram on his back and assumed his natural shape, while all the others went towards Bindreben. Ram, having been forewarned by Creeshna, was not alarmed, but, on the contrary, rendered himself so heavy that the Ditya could no longer support him, and Ram striking him some blows at the same time with his fist, the Ditya fell to the ground; and the children were not arrived at Bindreben when they were made happy by this spectacle, and praised Ram for having so opportunely avenged his wicked intentions.

One day, while Creeshna and his companions had been playing in the wood, the cows strayed so far in feeding, that they could not be found; but Creeshna mounted a high tree, and, calling each cow with a loud voice by her own name, collected them all together;

but, as they were going home, on a sudden they found themselves in the face of a mighty conflagration, which came on them as swift as a horse in full gallop. Immediately they flew to their known protector, Creeshna, who told them to shut all their eyes while he thought of a remedy; and, in an instant, on his bidding them open them again, they saw neither the fire nor the same place in Bindreben. The cows were where they had been all mustered, and they kept their way homeward. When they came near to Bindreben the sound of Creeshna's flute struck the ears of the Gopias; all came to the end of the road to wait for him; for, they had determined not to eat any food till they should see the ease-inspiring countenance of Bhagavat. When their several children arrived, they demanded of them why they had made their return so late? They answered, that they had that day escaped a great calamity; having been in danger of a dreadful fire, which Creeshna's power had extinguished. The Gopias immediately went to Nanda's house with this account, but Yasodha paid no credit to it, as not thinking it possible for children to operate such miracles.

When the hot wind had passed away and the season of Beresat (spring) came on; when the earth re-assumed its green livery, and the bow of heaven beamed benediction on the human race; at this beautiful season, and in a place where nature had lavished all her charms, did Creeshna amuse himself sometimes with the veena and sometimes with his flute, so that the waters stood still to hear him, and the birds lost the power over their wings. The Gopias, who at that time were in Berjepooree, were all fascinated with the sound; and, coming out of their doors, assembled tumultuously together with the most ardent desire to behold him. With one voice they exclamed, " O that flute of heavenly fabrication is above all eulogy! O the happiness of that reed which rests on his divine lip, and from which he produces those heavenly sounds which steal away the souls from Soors and Assoors, from Mena and Eendra!" On hearing its bewitching notes, the daughters of the Devatas came also to the spot; and, standing with

their hands joined together where Creeshna was attending the cattle, remained motionless before him. The cows dropped the grass and corn from their mouths on hearing the tunes he played; and the calves, forgetting their want of nutrition, let go the dugs from their mouths, and the milk dropped upon the ground. Exactly in the same state were the fawns and other animals standing near him; while Devatas, Reyshees, and Peetrees, all stricken with rapture, fell down senseless beside him. In this happy season did Creeshna bestow joy and satisfaction on all living creatures, and often as he touched his flute in the presence of the adoring Gopias, one exclaimed, " Happy animals, inhabiting Berjeben, who enjoy the sight of Creeshna!" Another said, " O favoured stream of Jumna, and other transparent pools and fountains, whence Creeshna deigns to drink!" Another said, " O happy trees of this wood, under whose thick shade Creeshna delights to slumber!" Another exclaimed, " Melodious above all is the flute which resides for ever on his lip!" Another said, " Honoured above all existing animals are these cattle which the Creator himself leads to pasture!" Thus did the Gopias plunge into the fathomless ocean of love, and admire him who had on a yellow robe, a peacock's feather on his head, a brilliant rosary round his neck, and a flute on his lip, and they said to each other, " How happy are we whom he condescends to love!" In short, by their purity of faith and zeal of attachment, their hearts, at length, became *illumined*, and they knew and comprehended that Creeshna was the Creator of the world.

It is a long established custom that, in one month of each year, the maidens of Hindostan, after bathing in the river, should perform a service to Bhavani Deva to obtain their desires, which are all for a well-fated husband; and on that day they fast. In conformity to that custom, the whole band of the Gopias performed their worship, and uttered their wishes, which were all for Creeshna; and, having fasted, as was requisite, they took the vessels necessary for the worship, and went away to bathe in the Jumna. Creeshna followed

them unseen; and, when they had all stripped and were got into the water and amusing themselves, he came and, hiding all their clothes, got up into a tree. But, when they came out of the water and found their clothes missing, they were in despair; and, looking about them, spied Creeshna in a tree. It was, however, in vain that they solicited and reproached him, in hopes of getting back their vestments; he assured them he should not return them until they came one by one naked out of the water to claim them. After much hesitation, and many attempts to palliate the rigour of this resolution, they at last complied; and, coming out and approaching him in the mode prescribed, received their several dresses. — Rajah Pereecheete then demanded how all this injustice and indelicacy could quadrate with the divinity? Sekedeva answered, "That, first, it was not proper by any means for a woman to bathe perfectly naked; and that, on doing so, she could only be freed from the crime by paying the penalty which in India is called peerachhet, and consists in coming from the water naked in sight of men. Creeshna, therefore, acted in conformity to the ordinances of the Veda, to confirm the principles of religion in demanding the peerachhet. Those maidens, too, though they assumed the appearance of shame and bashfulness, were inwardly rejoiced at the circumstance, as the lover rejoices at every thing that procures him the sight of his beloved." The maidens then went home, and Creeshna said to them, "In a very short time shall ye obtain the object of your wishes."

Once a year, too, the Gopas and Gopias were accustomed to celebrate a Yug, in honour of Eendra. When the anniversary came, Nanda and all the rest made their preparations accordingly, and collected together a great quantity of money, and a variety of articles, for the purpose. While this was doing, Creeshna came into their assembly, and very dutifully requested of his father and the other heads of the place to tell him wherefore all these things were collected, since the young could only receive instructions from the

aged? Nanda answered, that all these articles would be expended on a Yug, in honour of Eendra; by whose propitiation rain would descend on the earth, to revive the vegetables, and refresh man and beast. Creeshna next, with many apologies, begged leave to ask whether any rain fell in those places where men omitted to propitiate Eendra? But not one of them chose to answer.* He then added, that rain fell by the power of the Almighty: that man must be exceedingly weak and forgetful not to address themselves to that Being, of whom Eendra himself stood in need. That good and evil, ease and difficulty, pleasure and pain, were the lot of each individual, as the Creator ordained; and Eendra had nothing to do with it. He therefore very submissively proposed, that all these preparations, which had cost so much trouble in collecting, should be distributed among the Brahmins; that part should be given for food to the cows, and the remainder to the necessitous of every description: and he assured them their affairs would not fail to prosper, even more than in other years. This proposal was greatly admired by the wiser part of the assembly; but those, who were of more confined notions, wondered that a child should presume to interfere with the concerns of the Devatas. However, in the end, the contriver of all affairs succeeded in persuading them to adopt his proposition; so that, getting together their best apparel, and ornamenting the horns and bodies of their cows, they went to the mountain Goverdhana; and, going three times the circuit of the mountain, eat the feast. Creeshna, unperceived, took the first morsel and put it to his mouth, and said, "May Brahma, Veeshnu, Mahadeva, and all the Devatas of the three worlds, be satisfied herewith." The instant in which he put the morsel to his mouth, it extended to all the existences of all the worlds; just as water, poured out on the root of a tree, extends its refreshing moisture to all the leaves and branches.

* This apparently is an imitation, by means of the spurious Gospels, of Christ in his infancy disputing among the doctors.

As the men of the Ben neglected the Yug that year, in honour of Eendra, and as Eendra knew at the instigation of Creeshna, he thought it necessary to bring them back to their duty by severity; conceiving Creeshna to have been no more than a mortal, and meaning to put him to shame. Accordingly, summoning the guardian spirit of rain, he ordered him to let loose the rain that was reserved for the day of judgement, and to send such a storm for seven days and nights successively, that all the men and beasts of the place should be drowned; but to take care that it did not rain in any other part. Accordingly, on the same instant began a most violent storm of rain, falling in vast torrents, with hail like large stones, and most terrific thunder. The men of the Ben, in agony, called on Creeshna, who desired them all to get on the mountain Goverdhana, and take refuge in a cave there, with their cattle and effects: which they did. *Creeshna then lifted up the mountain on his little finger, with as much ease as if it had been a lotos,* and held it up above the storm; so that the inhabitants were perfectly secure. Eendra, finding his anger took no effect, at length discovered, to his infinite shame and mortification, that Creeshna was the Almighty; and that he had been utterly deceived in supposing him a human creature. So he caused the storm to cease, not without violent apprehensions on his own account. Creeshna, when the rain was over, restored the mountain to its place.

The men of the Ben then left Goverdhâna, and went home, wondering how a child of seven years old could perform such miracles, assuring themselves he must be Perebrahme; recounting all his feats from the time he was one year old; and telling Nanda that he never could be his child, but must be HE who is exempt from both birth and death. Nanda replied, "It must be so; for, at the period of naming him, the venerable priest Garga told me, "This child is the Almighty Creator, who hath before taken different bodies of a red colour, of white, of yellow, and of black, in his various incarnations, and who now again hath assumed a black colour, since

in black all other colours are absorbed; and this child is the son of Vasudeva, for which reason he shall be called Vasudeva, and shall also assume a different name, according to his several feats. He shall remove all grief and trouble from the Gopias and cow-herds; and doubtless this is Bhagavan." From that day, Nanda and the rest gave credit to what the young boys had related of Creeshna, which they before deemed incredible. Eendra, extremely abashed at his own ignorance and presumption, threw himself to the ground from off his lofty elephant Iravut; and, taking with him the cow Kamdeva, prostrated himself at Creeshna's feet in an agony of shame, and made the most submissive apologies. Creeshna easily forgave him; and, after a lecture, in which he told him, that he, Creeshna, was the same who is called by some the Almighty Power, and by others Necessity, and by others Fate, or Predestination, bid him go home. Iravut and Kamdeva, who stood by, burst out in accents of praise and thanksgiving. The Kinners and Gandharves who accompanied Eendra rained flowers without number, cows out of joy dropped their milk, trees and shrubs acquired new leaves, the water of the river dashed its waves with transport, and rubies and diamonds were found at its bottom.

Eendra went away on the 10th day of the moon; Nanda fasted on the 11th; and on the 12th, at day-break, went to bathe in the Jumna. When he went in, the guardians of the stream, who are the servants of the Devata Varuna, hurried him away under water [that is, Nanda was, by some accident, drowned]. As Nanda delayed so very long his return home, his people went out and searched for him every where, but in vain. Ram, too, and Roheenee, and Yasodha, anxiously explored every place for him, and Creeshna offered to do so also. After a little reflection Creeshna found that he was under water, and plunged after him into the stream. Varuna, and the other Devatas who were in Patal, (Hades,) learning Creeshna's approach, came with reverence to salute him, while the former wondered to see the Devatas of Patal fall at his son's feet. Varuna now made many entreaties for

pardon for his servants error in bringing Nanda thither. Creeshna smiled benevolently; and, taking Nanda by the hand, led him back to the terrestrial region from his watery abode: nor did Nanda recollect any of the circumstances that had passed under water, but as a dream. Great rejoicings were made on his return.

At a season of just and delicious temperature of weather, on a certain beautiful evening, Creeshna came to Bindreben. The Devatas, in honour of the moon shining in its meridian lustre, had adorned themselves in variegated chains of pearls and rubies, had robed themselves in vestments of a rose-colour, and rubbed themselves with saffron, so that the earth received fresh splendor from their appearance, and a warm and sweet air breathed around, when Creeshna began to play on his flute. Immediately on hearing it, the Gopias all left their several occupations unfinished, and ran out to listen: even those, whose husbands or parents forbade them, sent their hearts and souls to the place whence the sound proceeded; and, thus enflamed with passion and hurried away from themselves by the ardor of desire, they became worthy of eternal liberation. — Rajah Pereecheete expressed his surprise that these women, who knew not but that Creeshna was a mortal, and whose desires were perfectly correspondent to their belief, should be worthy of MOOKT. Sekedeva answered, "That the Gopias, having always found Creeshna most friendly and attached to them, might well be rewarded for their love, when Seesoopal obtained liberation notwithstanding all his blasphemies and abominations. So also Pootna, and the Rakshas, and Dityas, emissaries of Cansa, who came to *kill* Creeshna, all obtained liberation from him; and, indeed, in this Creeshna-Avatar, wherein the Almighty took a beautiful form, whoever sincerely bent his heart towards him, whether in attachment or in enmity, obtained liberation." — Creeshna seeing the Gopias there, affected to ask them, "If all was not well at home? That they had come out thither, at night, too, when it was neither usual nor decent for women to leave their houses. If the serenity of the night, which is the pro-

moter of desire, had tempted them thither, they ought to direct those desires towards their husbands, and so obtain at once physical and mental satisfaction. If they should say they came to see *him*, it was well. He had a due regard for the good will of his friends, but he advised them by all means to return directly home, as all dutiful wives should do, to their husbands, and not risk their comfort in this world and happiness in the next by slight or ill conduct towards them; since the Vedas, which are the very words of God, declare that a husband, however defective or criminal, is in the place of the Almighty to his wife, therefore they must immediately go home."* This speech threw them all into despair, which they manifested by all manner of incoherences. One of them even said, that, "When frenzy and distraction seized the mind, all duties and all worldly motives were overturned and forgotten; and that, as they were altogether intoxicated by the sound of his flute, it was in vain to preach up to them their duty or attachment to their husbands. That they well knew that those who would profess an attachment to him must renounce all other connexions, as they did, and that they knew him to be Bhagavan Perebrahme; that, if he ordered them to go, they were *lame*, and their feet would not stir; but, if he called them to him, they *flew*. That, in short, separate himself as much as he would, corporally, he could not escape from their hearts and minds." Creeshna, perceiving them thus sincerely inflamed, would not be too harsh with them, but took each of them in his arms, and treated them with equal tenderness and familiarity; so that, at length, all the happiness and transport that are to be found in the world were collected into one place, in the hearts of the Gopias. Wherever they turned, Creeshna was close to them; and, as women naturally acquiesce in the truth of an idea that pleases them, they concluded

* This doctrine, suitable enough to the despotism of the East, will not gain Creeshna many female admirers in European regions.

Creeshna to be equally fond of them, when, on a sudden, he totally disappeared from among them.

When Creeshna had thus vanished, the Gopias, like a stag strayed from the herd, stared round them on every side in extreme astonishment and despair. They became at once utterly bereaved of sense and reflection, and demanded news of Creeshna from every thing they saw: not a tree or flower that they passed was uninterrogated. At last they addressed the Earth, so often ennobled by the touch of his foot. "The Earth," said they, "certainly enjoyed his regard; for he it was who, when Hirinakassap* had driven it to Patal with a spurn of his foot, brought it up again on his tusk, and he demanded nothing else but the Earth of Rajah Bali,† and completely engrossed it to himself before he had finished his three steps: therefore the Earth," they argued, "could not be ignorant where he was." While they were thus raving and looking wildly about, one of them espied the print of Creeshna's foot in the sand, and immediately they all set out to follow that tract; and, while thus agitated between hope and despair, they espied another print of his foot, and with it that of a woman. This increased their love and sorrow by the addition of excessive jealousy. They soon came to the green turf where the footsteps could no longer be traced, and they wandered about dejected and forlorn; when, on a sudden, they saw a woman whom they immediately knew for the late companion of Creeshna, and, on asking her where he was, they found that she too was still more a prey to the most poignant grief for his absence, and she united her sorrows to the rest. At length, one of them proposed to cease all this idle search and fruitless wandering, and sit down together to feed their passion by relating the actions of Creeshna's childhood. Accordingly they sat down in the very place where he had left them, and began to act over again all his mischievous tricks and miracles: the throwing down of the milk and obstruction of the process of making

* Referring to the VARA Avatar.

† Alluding to the BAMUN Avatar.

the butter; afterwards the killing of Pek Assoor and Vetes Assoor. Then one made an image of the shape of the mountain Goverdhana by a cloth on a shalee, and another, tinging herself with the colour of Creeshna, held it up on her finger; and, in short, they had so heated their imaginations, that the trembling of a leaf made them look anxiously on all sides to see if Creeshna were not coming. In truth, so transported were they with grief and affection, that they no longer knew where they were or what they were doing. Creeshna at last took pity on the grief and despair of the Gopias, and suddenly appeared among them, nor did they know which way he came. They first all offered him worship with flowers; then one took the lotos he had in his hand, and each of them took hold of both his hands, and all began to ask why he had left them, and all caressed him, expressing in different language, actions, and attitudes, the same passion.

Creeshna having promised the Gopias that he would continue to them his kindness, they became elated with the happiness and elevation of the fourteen stages of the universe, and all rose up, and taking hold of his hands, began to dance. —The rajah said, " She who had thus seized hold of Creeshna's hand had certainly cause to be proud; but what became of the others?" Sekedeva answered, " That the omnipotent Creator multiplied his form in proportion to the number of all the Gopias; and himself giving his hand to each of them, and taking the hand of each of them in his own hand, began to dance; so that each of them saw and believed that Creeshna was close to her side." — The Devatas, and Brahma, and Mahadeva, and all the rest, left their several stations, and, suspending their austerities, came thither as spectators and presented all manner of flowers. In that agitation of the feet, and delicate motion of the limbs and waist, all the refinement of the Oriental dance was exhibited. The moisture of perspiration came on the cheeks of the Gopias, their hair was dishevelled, and their jetty tresses trembled over their necks, resembling black snakes feeding on the

dew of the hyacinth. Each of the Gopias, as she became tired with dancing, taking hold of Creeshna's hand, sat down or stood up with her hand round his neck and her head leaning on his shoulder in the most graceful and affectionate manner. On the ground where they had danced many flowers fell from the bosoms of the Gopias, and multitudes of bees, attracted by the fragrance, swarmed about them. The listener could not depart after once hearing the sound of the flute and the tinkling of the Gopias' feet; nor could the birds stir a wing; while the pupils of the Gopias' eyes, all turned towards Creeshna. In short, after a thousand sports, they went to bathe, and renewed their caresses in the Jumna. The enjoyment of Creeshna with the Gopias, and of the Gopias with Creeshna, is a mystery, and cannot be described.*

One day, by Cansa's order, Breeksheb Assoor Ditya went to Bindreben in the form of an immense bull, his eyes inflamed with rage, his tail erected and bent over his head, his belly enormously distended, while his horns pierced the sky. Every moment fire flashed from his mouth, he tore up the earth as he walked along, and all animals fell down terrified at his bellowing. The inhabitants of the Ben, in this calamity, all called upon Creeshna, who, after comforting them, went towards the Ditya, and called to him at a distance, telling him that he knew him perfectly well under the disguise of a bull; that, if any disease tormented him, and made him thus frantic, he would cure him. Breeksheb, rejoicing to find so easily what he came for, ran towards him with intent at one plunge to toss him over the fourteen Dweepas: but Bhagavan seized both his horns with his two hands and threw him back eighteen steps; and thus for an hour together, as often as the bull made a push forwards, Creeshna threw him as much backwards; so that his strength being quite exhausted, and having lost his breath, he fell to the ground. Creeshna then, seizing him, violently twisted his neck

* There is a print of this dance in Holwell. It is supposed to represent the circular dance of the PLANETS round the SUN, warmed by his influence and guided by his ray.

round till the blood flowed from his mouth and nose, and his soul fled from his ponderous body. At this act the Devatas sung praises, and rained down flowers from heaven.

Cansa soon heard the sad news of the Ditya's death; and, at the same time, Nared came to Cansa, and said, "Know you not, O Cansa! that the slayer of so many Dityas and Rakshas, he who hath now killed your mighty champion Breeksheb Assoor, is the son of Vasudeva and Devaci, though reputed the son of Nanda and Yasodhă; that the girl, whom you dashed against the stones, supposing it the daughter of Devaci, was, in fact, the daughter of Yasodha, exchanged for a son; and that Ram is the real son of Vasudeva, born of Roheence, who was detained in Gokul for fear of you. I told you what would happen at the time of Devaci's delivery, but you have not the control of fate, nor can you change what heaven has decreed." Cansa was greatly alarmed at this speech of Nared, and felt his strength diminish within him. However, he put Vasudeva and Devaci again into prison, whom he had released, and, sending for Keishee, the chief of his Deos, with various arguments solicited him to go and kill Creeshna; and, after dismissing him, sent for Chandoor, and Mooshtek, and Seleb, and Selek, his guards and wrestlers, and said, "Ram and Creeshna, reputed sons of Nanda, but, in fact, sons of Vasudeva, will be invited hither on some pretence or other, and you must kill them in the way of your profession, for they are meer youths without strength, though to me, alas! as the angel of death. First, then, prepare a place for the assault, with a proper elevated seat for myself and my friends to behold it in safety; and let the inner gate be richly decorated and fortified, that my companions and viziers, and all the strongest of my guards, may keep ward there. And before that let there be another gate made, where Keel Assoor, the elephant-chief of all my elephants, must be stationed, that, when the lads come thither, he may dash them to pieces with his trunk and feet. Let there also be yet another gate made before these, where must be placed the strong bow, for the Dhanook Yug; and

entrance must be denied to the lads there, unless they shall first bend that bow. The boys, desirous to see the exhibition, will naturally endeavour to draw the bow, but it is not an affair for such striplings as they are, and then will be the time for my iron-fisted champions to dispatch them." After this, Cansa selected from among all his friends *Akroor*, whom, with blandishing speeches and even the humblest entreaties, he besought to assist him in accomplishing the death of Ram and Creeshna; telling him that, as Eendra, by the aid of Veeshnu, subjected all the Devatas, so should he himself succeed by the help of Akroor. He urged him to use every artifice to induce Creeshna and Ram to come to Mathura; adding that, although it was his destiny to die by the eighth son of Devaci, yet still every animal was led by the natural fondness for life to exert himself to avert the stroke. He told him that the only means of salvation for him left was to get Creeshna, and Ram, and Nanda, and all the cow-herds, into his power; that he had provided various means for their destruction, first by the Dhanook Yug, then by Keel Assoor, the elephant, and, on failure of those means, by Chandoor and Mooshtek in wrestling. Then the tyrant exultingly exclaimed, " Yes, I will kill Vasudeva and Devaci; and afterwards my own father Ogur Sein, who is their protector, shall feel my vengeance, and my heart will be at ease. After this I shall enjoy a long-extended reign, and I will pay all respectful attention to Rajah Jarasandha, my patron and tutor, and to my other firm and tried friends. Bring hither, therefore, without delay, O Akroor! those whom I have doomed to destruction, but let my intentions be a profound secret. Your public pretence must be the bow and the wrestling. To see the conflict I will invite all the neighbouring chiefs, and the day of Creeshna's death shall be devoted to the joys of the banquet." Akroor was very little persuaded by Cansa's speech; but, after long silence, having apologized for his freedom, observed, " That Eendra, whose weapon was the bejere, and Ravan, who had holden death in chains, yet could not finally parry his inevitable dart. All must die,

and it is natural to animals to struggle both with hand and foot when expiring, as you now do. Remember, from fate there is no escape; but I shall certainly obey your order." So Akroor went to his house, and Cansa retired to an apartment in his palace.

Previously to this, in conformity to Cansa's commands, Keishee, the Ditya, had arrived at Bindreben. He came in size like a mountain, with fiery eyes, staring as if they would burst from their sockets. Keishee and Creeshna soon met, and, at the first onset, Creeshna threw him backwards a bow-string's length with such violence, that he fell senseless to the earth: but, soon coming to himself, he ran open-mouthed at Creeshna, as if with an intent to swallow him alive. Creeshna instantly thrust his hand into his mouth; and, though Keishee with all his strength laboured to close his teeth, he was unable; while Creeshna's hand, by divine power, grew so enormous in length and breadth within his mouth, that it closed up the whole orifice. Thus stifled, he fell to the ground, became violently convulsed, his belly swelled up like an Indian gourd, and his soul fled from his body. The Devatas rained flowers from heaven, and all men shouted the praises of Creeshna. At the same time Nared came thither, and, making his prostrations before Bhagavan, uttered a prophecy, first praising him for having slain Keishee, the mightiest of the Ditya chiefs. "O Jaggernaut!" he exclaimed, "O Perebrahme! I see Chandoor, and Mooshtek, and Seleb, and Selek, the athletics of Cansa, and Devaci Seer, and Sertekban, his friends, already dead; to him who shall slay them, I bow with reverence. To him who shall recal the dead sons of Sendeepen to life, and who shall extract the jewel from Yamoonet's head, I bow with reverence. O Jaggernaut! thou who shalt slay Jarasandha, and Denteebektre, and Seesoopal, and the eighteen Krhoonies, to thee I bow with reverence. Thou, too, shall lift the Pandoos above both worlds, and found the city of Duaraka in the water; to thee, Creeshna, I bow with reverence, and claim thee for my protector; oh! do thou dispel from me all ignorance in addressing thy name." Ha-

ving said this, Nared departed; and Creeshna, having thus accomplished Keishee's death, went to Bindreben, where the Gopias and cow-herds all made rejoicings.

Another day Creeshna and his companions played at blindman's buff. On that day Bhoom Assoor Ditya, coming thither, mixed himself in the play under the semblance of a child, and no one had any suspicion of the fraud. When the boys had all hid themselves to avoid the *blindman*, Bhoom stole them away one after the other, and concealed them in a cave of the mountain, so that few were left at the sport: then Creeshna began to perceive that there was some secret agency in operation, and recognized that old wolf. Assuming himself, therefore, the form of a wolf, he seized him by the throat and threw him on the ground; and, although he quitted the child's form and assumed his own, Creeshna did not release him, but he gave up his life there. Creeshna then brought the boys from the place where he had concealed them, and asked them who had led them thither? they answered, one of themselves. The Devatas again rejoiced on that day, and the cow-herds, under Creeshna's protection, returned home in safety.—To return to Akroor: that herald, taking leave of Cansa, went to Bindreben to execute his commission; but, no sooner had he set out than he began to recount to himself the advantages he had acquired by the opportunity of enjoying Creeshna's presence, and, in a long soliloquy, expressed a full confidence in Creeshna's divine nature and attributes; imagining himself to have obtained some extraordinary merits in a former life to be thus fortunate; and that, when he should fall at Creeshna's feet, that liberator from the *serpent of death* would lay his hand upon his head. Thus, in various reflections on Creeshna's mercy and his own unworthiness, did Akroor pass the time as he journeyed; and [illegible]d setting to hear his pious ejaculations; but, when [illegible]ndreben, that planet went down. Creeshna was [illegible] Gopia at the milking of the cows; and Akroor, [illegible] mark of his divine foot, and

recognized the Padma, and Chakra, and Geda, and Kemel. The Devatas, who had so often adored that spot, on beholding the fervour of Akroor's devotion and the purity of his faith, were stricken with shame. After the cows were milked, Creeshna came home with Ram, smiling like a lotos in bloom: yes, Creeshna, that beautiful personage, richly arrayed in garments of yellow and blue, with all the splendid insignia of a god, with long taper arms, and a string of flowers on his neck, at one moment calling one cow by its name, then another, and sometimes smiling on Akroor, glided easily along talking with the cow-boys. Akroor, on his approach, felt a paroxysm of agitation, and, at last, falling at his feet, with tears in his eyes, announced his name. Both Creeshna and Ram, knowing that he was of the elder branch of the Yadava family, would not suffer his prostrations, but lifted him up, and gave him a most cordial reception, and led him into the house: there they *washed his feet*, and then set victuals before him. When he was well refreshed, Nanda and Oope-Nanda inquired of him the state of affairs at Mathura, how Cansa's government flourished, and tidings of Vasudeva and Devaci; uttering, at the same time, the most bitter invectives against Cansa for the murder of his own sister's six children, and calling him the greatest of criminals.

Thus did Creeshna kindly receive Akroor, and thus did HE, who knows the hidden thoughts, fulfil Akroor's fondest expectations. Creeshna next inquired the cause of his coming thither; telling him the Gopias and cow-boys would all laugh at the impropriety of his paying such submissive adorations to a little boy. Akroor, standing up with reverence, informed him of Nared's coming to Cansa after Keishee's death, and acquainting him that Creeshna was son of Vasudeva and Devaci; from which moment Cansa redoubled his desire of destroying him, and had sent him (Akroor) to bri[illegible]
Creeshna and Ram before him. Creeshna [illegible]
then told Nanda, that, as Akroor was the [illegible]
and was come by Cansa's or[illegible]

was determined to go, and that Nanda and the rest of the Gopias should take their butter and cream and go also, for that it had long been his earnest wish to see Cansa. The news was soon spread through the Ben that Creeshna would go to Mathura, and it excited terror and astonishment in the mind of every Gopa and Gopia, and they all flocked to Nanda's house. The Gopias particularly exhibited all the symptoms of despair, and expressed themselves in the tenderest lamentations. That grief was so violent and that despair so extraordinary, that even Akroor forgot his mission to sympathize with them. The next morning, before the sun had put on his *crown of rays*, Creeshna and Ram mounted on a carriage with Akroor, and set off; Nanda, Oope-Nanda, and the other Gopas and cow-herds, placed their butter and cream on carriages and attended them, Akroor promising the Gopias that Creeshna would soon return to them again. *They* lost not sight of the carriage for a moment till distance rendered it completely invisible; then they watched the cloud of dust it raised, till even that was no longer to be seen; and all returned weeping and lamenting to their houses. Creeshna soon arrived at the bank of the Jumna, when Akroor got down to bathe. The moment he plunged in, he beheld Creeshna under the water; but, lifting up his head, he found him still on the bank where he had left him. Again he plunged, and again he beheld the very same august person both in the water and on the bank. Astonishment seized him, and a kind of holy horror thrilled through his veins: he plunged several times more, but always the same objects presented themselves to his sight, till at last he knew not which was the real Creeshna, that without or that within the water. At length, looking more stedfastly at the latter, he beheld innumerable Devatas standing with their hands joined before that form in the water in praise and adora-

[illegible] also Balhadur in the water in a sky-blue robe, with a [illegible] a thousand plumes waving sublime on every [illegible]ding by him, more distinctly, the form of [illegible] yellow robe beautiful to be-

hold, with ruby lips, his neck smooth as white coral, his arms very long and slender, his breast high and bold, his waist of elegant proportion, his legs beautiful beyond expression, his foot like the lotos-flower, and his nails red. He had a jewel of inestimable value in his crown, a Chhowder round his waist, a Zennar upon his shoulder, a string of flowers round his neck, a splendid Koondel in his ear, the Kowstek Men on his arm, and the Shankhe, Chakra, Geda, and Kemel, in his hands; while Nanda, Oope-Nanda, and the whole tribe of Reyshees and Devatas, stood by him with their hands joined, uttering his praises. Akroor, completely engrossed by that form, joined also in the profoundest adorations; and, while Creeshna looked towards Ram and smiled, thus addressed the incarnate God: "O Bhagavan! men, brutes, and all other created beings, are formed of the three dispositions, the Sat, Raj, and Tama Goon, and those three are reflections of thy light. Thy essence is inscrutable, but its shadow is in all bodies, just like the image of the sun in vases of water: if the vases be broken, where is the image? and yet that image neither is increased nor diminished by the fracture of the vessels. In this manner thou art all in all. Thou art thyself numerous Avatars. Thy Hayagriva-Avatar killed Medhoo, the Ditya. On the back of the tortoise, in thy Courma-Avatar, did the Devatas place the solid orb of the earth; while, from the water of the sea, by the churning-staff of Mount Meru, they obtained the immortal Amreeta of their desires. Hirinakassap, who had carried the earth down to Patal, did thy Varaha-Avatar slay, and bring up the earth on the boar's tusk: and Prahlaud, whom Hirinakassap tormented for his zeal towards thee, did thy Nara-Sing Avatar place in tranquillity. In thy Dwarf, or Bamun, Avatar, thou didst place Bali in the government of the mighty monarchy of Pat[illegible]. Thou, too, art that Parasu Ram who cut down the entire [illegible]dence of the Reyshees. And thou art Ram [illegible] Ravan. O supreme Bhagavan! thou [illegible] shalt tranquillize and give [illegible]

Dityas. The Avatar of Kalci, when the infidels shall daily increase, is also thy Omnipotent Power, to thee I bow with reverence. To thy Almighty power the understanding of finite man cannot reach; well may it escape the sight of myself and other men, who are a prey to worldly desires, when the mightiest Devatas, Brahma and Seeva, are lost in astonishment. He who is freed from the bonds of prejudice and absorbed in thy light is like a deer who knows not its own musk-bag, and yet is attracted every way by the scent of the musk; so he who is enamoured of thee knows thee not, and yet is intoxicated by the scent. O Natha! I, who know nothing, fly to thee for protection: do thou, who didst attract Nared and Ambereeke, shew mercy upon me also, and give me to see and know THEE."

After Akroor had thus expressed his praises, all that he had seen in the water became invisible, and he returned in admiration and astonishment out of the river. Creeshna asked him why he had so often looked towards him and then plunged again under the water, and why he seemed so amazed? "O Natha! sovereign Lord," he replied, "thou well knowest what I have seen in the water. Thy power fascinates all the world, and exhibits fictitious appearances every where, which mislead and blind the understanding. Ask me not the wonders I have beholden, but pity me, and take me, miserable as I am, under thine Almighty protection." Creeshna smiled, and ordered the carriages to advance. Evening came on as they arrived near Mathura, and Akroor stopped the carriage in a retired place. Creeshna there told Akroor to go forward, and promised to follow him next morning; nor would he accept Akroor's pressing invitations to go to the residence of the latter, but he, and Ram, and Nanda, and the Gopas, all stayed on the spot the whole night. [illegible] morning Creeshna looked towards the city, and there [illegible] built of pure chrystal, the lofty doors formed of [illegible] of the purest water engraved upon those [illegible] and diamonds. Round the

fortification was a deep ditch, and the suburbs were all filled with rows of warehouses, and innumerable parrots were perched on the domes and in the galleries, while thousands of majestic peacocks displayed their proud plumage at the doors, and enamoured doves were seen joyfully cooing with their delighted mates. The bazars and squares were free from dust and dirt, and the reflection from the walls, from the polish of the white stone, shone brilliantly upon the walls opposite. All the people at Mathura, who had before heard the wonders of Creeshna, stood waiting to see him with flowers and other presents; and, when Creeshna moved forwards into the city, they had set up trees of Kepeeleh before all the doors. The women left their work unfinished to run and gaze upon him, while Creeshna went on smiling and looking with ineffable sweetness. By the way he met the washerman* of Cansa with a quantity of his master's fine clothes, and he thought fit to ask him for some; but the washerman gave him a very rude answer, and told him, clothes made for a monarch would ill become a country clown like himself. Creeshna lifted up his hand and with one blow struck the washerman's head off, and then taking what clothes he liked, and giving others to Ram and all the Gopas, scattered the remainder about the street. At that time a tailor happened to be passing by, who, coming of his own accord to Creeshna, fitted on the clothes exactly to his body, and, for his good offices, was rewarded with eternal liberation. A little beyond was the house of Soodaman, the king's gardener, and Creeshna stopping at his door, the gardener came and offered him his choicest flowers and wreaths, which he had made for Cansa, in a most devout and submissive speech.

Creeshna then went forward, and, in their progress, they met a woman named Koobeja. Creeshna told the cow-herds to call to him that crooked deformed creature; but she good-[illegible] to come, and asked what that straight com[illegible]

* After the pompous description above [illegible] cannot prevail on myself to erase it: wa[illegible]

with such a crooked wretch as she was; however, they brought her by main strength. Creeshna said to Ram, "Behold the beauty of this divine creature, and yet greater beauty is still in her destiny." She had sandal and flowers in her hand, which Creeshna solicited, and demanded her name and occupation. She replied, "That, as the Creator had thought proper to bestow on her form three lumps, she was called Treebengee; that her cast was Serendheree,° her employment to carry sandal and flowers to Cansa, and that it was time she should be at the palace." Though she said this, her heart was inwardly converted to Creeshna's faith, and she offered him her sandal and flowers. Creeshna took hold of her neck with one hand, placed two fingers of the other under her chin, and, setting his foot upon her's, gently drew her towards him, and she became perfectly straight and handsome. Creeshna was then going on, but Koobeja caught hold of his robe, and said, "O Bhagavan! all animals are born with the three lumps of Sat, Raj, and Tama Goon,* from which nothing but thy favour can release them: now that thou hast made me straight and handsome from crooked and deformed, honour my house with thy presence, and exalt me above both worlds." Creeshna promised to come to her house after he had seen Cansa, and then went on inquiring the way to Jegge Dhanook, or the place where the bow was to be bent; and, on his arrival there, he approached the Dhanook, and stooped to take up the bow. The keepers who were sitting there forbad him to touch it on peril of his life; they warned him that the strongest men could with great difficulty bend or even lift it; and, if he attempted to draw it and should fail, instant destruction was his doom. Creeshna lifted up the bow with the facility with which a straw might be elevated [illegible] snapped it asunder at the first effort. The heavens and the [illegible] noise that bow made in breaking, and the ears of the [illegible]erga tingled at the sound. Cansa, too, was ex-

[illegible]eja is an allegorical personage.

tremely alarmed at the news of the bow having been broken. When Creeshna went forward, after breaking the bow, many mighty men and able warriors ran after him, crying, *Stop him! strike him down!* but no one interfered, and all men conceived he must be a Devata and not a man. With these events the day drew towards its close, and Creeshna with his companions rested there that evening, regaling on rice and milk. Cansa, in the mean time, having learnt what this despised youth had done, began seriously to feel his own inferiority; and, when he went to sleep, he dreamt that he saw himself without a head, and the moon divided into two parts; that several deep wounds were in his body, that he was accompanied by none but dead persons, that he was mounted on an ass, rubbed with oil, with his feet bound, and his body publicly exposed in a naked state. He started up, and found he had only had an ill-omened dream, but he could sleep no more! In the morning, with an oppressed heart, he came from his chamber and ordered preparations for the assault to commence, and the athletics sounded to the combat with drums and hautboys. Chandoor and Mooshtek, with their pupils, began; Saleb, and Selek, and Seltek, sparred. The neighbouring rajahs who had been invited took their seats, and Cansa also ascended his throne.

Creeshna, early in the morning, prepared himself for the festival, and said to Ram, "I will wrestle with Chandoor, and Mooshtek shall feel your strength." But, when they came to the gate, they found a fierce elephant placed there to oppose them. Creeshna, fastening up all his hair together to the crest on his head, and, binding the vest that covered his shoulders fast round his waist, told the elephant-driver to make room or he must perish; but the driver urged on the beast with fury to attack him; and thi[illegible] [illegible]a's best elephant. No elephant like him was to [illegible]

therefore reserved for some desperate extr[illegible]

goading him forward with all his mi[illegible]

ing like thunder, sprang [illegible]